

HALESOWEN CHRONICLE



Thursday, December 5, 2013

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Tunnel raid

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See Page 13



Gift of life

Nurse donates kidney to help chronically-ill niece

See Page 14



Leader is writing to PM over job losses

SANDWELL Council chiefs are asking David Cameron to intervene over energy giant npower's decision to cut 400 jobs in Oldbury.

The company will close its Quayside House offices in Rounds Green Road, next summer. All of the 250 posts at Quayside House will be cut, and around 150 staff will go from npower's sister site Birchfield House, Joseph Street.

Some of the work will be moving to India via a deal with Tata Consultancy Services.

The firm's other Oldbury site, Birch House, is not expected to be affected.

Regrettable

Staff will begin to leave by March, after a 60-day consultation was launched. The news was broken to workers after they arrived for work last Thursday.

The back-office roles performed at Quayside House will be managed by Indian company Tata Consultancy Services instead, with work moving over in phases.

Lee Wilkes, head of site for Quayside House, said that the job losses were regrettable but necessary.

Sandwell Council leader Councillor Darren Cooper said: "This is a terrible blow for hundreds of hard-working people and families just before Christmas."

"I am writing to David Cameron to ask him to help get npower to reverse its decision but I am not hopeful of a reply."

"I am bitterly disappointed by the decision to move these jobs abroad."

Buyout at safety firm

CRADLEY Heath safety equipment company Kee Safety has been bought by its management in a £90 million deal, it was revealed yesterday.

The company supplies safety systems all over the world and employs 274 people.

Based on Cradley Business Park it achieved revenues of £35m in 2012.

'BULLY' CLAIM TORY RESIGNS

A COUNCILLOR says he is seeking legal advice after he stepped down amid accusations he had been 'bullying' a party member – an allegation that he refutes.

Halesowen councillor Ken Turner has been accused of 'bullying' behaviour by local party officials and was preparing to face a disciplinary hearing when he made his dramatic move this week.

He took the decision to step down from the Conservative Party on Monday – alongside his wife and fellow councillor Hazel Turner, who is sticking by her husband.

The allegations are centred on his conduct.

This week relations soured further when Halesowen and Rowley Regis Conservative Association said Councillor Turner had been a 'frequent source of embarrassment to the Conservative Party'.

Independents

Councillor Turner, who represents Hayley Green and Cradley South with his wife, denied the accusations and his wife claimed that it was he who was a victim.

He said: "We have had a number of calls and emails of support. We are totally committed to looking after our residents."

"We will continue to fight the next elections as independents."

When asked if he was fighting the allegations, Councillor Turner said: "Yes. This is why I can't make public what is going on because the legal advisors do suggest there are grounds on which a case can be put."

Mrs Turner, 67, who has been married to Ken for 51 years, added: "It is victimisation."

Dudley Conservative group leader, Councillor Patrick Harley, said a dispute had arisen during the selection process for a

Report by Andrew Turton

new Tory council candidate in the Hayley Green and Cradley South ward.

The seat is due to be vacated by former Mayor of Dudley Councillor Ray Burston, who is standing down after admitting having accessed pornography on his council computer.

"Ken is the one who has been accused of bullying and it is only right that those allegations were investigated thoroughly," said Councillor Harley. "If allegations of harassment and bullying are made against any member, particularly a senior member of our team, then the association has a duty to investigate."

"The investigation won't go anywhere now because he has resigned from the party so it will cease. I wish him well."

In a statement, Halesowen and Rowley Regis Conservative Association said: "He (Mr Turner) would have had the opportunity to present his case at that meeting later this month but has decided to pre-empt a decision by resigning. It wouldn't be appropriate to go into the specifics of the complaint until that matter is fully resolved."

"He has never been one to shy away from controversy and has been a frequent source of embarrassment to the Conservative party."

Showbiz Sianne wins award



Sianne Shepherd, this year's winner of Startime Variety's Sheila Darby Award, poses with her commemorative vase prize after showing her long-term commitment to the amateur theatre group based in Halesowen

RIISING from chorus singer to chairman in 18 years and taking part in more than 20 shows – Sianne Shepherd has become a hit in her own right at one of the Black Country's leading drama groups

The 46-year-old mother-of-one was presented with the annual Sheila Darby award from amateur theatre group Startime Variety for her long-term commitment to the organisation based in Halesowen.

The award is in memory of member

Mrs Darby, who died more than 10 years ago.

Mrs Shepherd, of Blagdon Road in Halesowen, said she felt 'humbled' to receive the accolade.

Pantomime

The IT worker joined the group after going to watch one of its shows with a friend 18 years ago.

She says she had been 'hooked' ever since.

She is busy preparing the group for its festive pantomime at the Cornbow

Hall in January, Goldilocks and the Three Bears.

Mrs Shepherd said: "I'm very humbled to get the award. It's a lovely feeling, it feels like a real reward for all the hard work put in."

"My favourite part of the job is seeing how everyone comes together when we are in a difficult position and pulls through to get a final result."

Publicity officer Angela Greenway said: "Sianne has worked extremely hard over the past year and fully deserves the award."

Crossing for road by site of tragedy

A NEW pedestrian crossing near the spot where a man was killed after being hit by a car is to go ahead – despite the axe falling on proposals for a new bus station nearby.

Dudley Council won cash for the £350,000 traffic light-controlled crossing on the dual carriageway in Pedmore Road, near the Merry Hill Centre, as part of bus service improvements.

The family of 53-year-old taxman Chris Clarke, who died in April as he walked to work at the HM Revenue & Customs at The Waterfront, called for a crossing to be installed on the busy road after the tragedy. People living off Pedmore Road have also been campaigning.

The crossing scheme – near the site of the former Robin Hood pub – was originally due to link with a £3 million new bus station at Merry Hill, which has been shelved by transport bosses as being too expensive.

But the council has revealed that the crossing will still be installed while a £450,000 scheme to introduce bus priority measures at the junction of The Boulevard and Mill Street, Brierley Hill, will also happen.

Councillor Khurshid Ahmed, cabinet member for transportation, said: "Dudley Council will still be introducing a traffic light-controlled crossing on Pedmore Road."

Man suffers head injury

A MAN was left with a serious head injury after being hit by a Smart car.

The 25-year-old was involved in a collision with the white car along the A458 Park Road at its junction with Park Lane, in Cradley.

The Midlands Air Ambulance was called to the incident, which happened just after noon on Tuesday.

The man was taken to Queen Elizabeth Hospital Birmingham for treatment, for what was described as a 'serious head injury'. He remained in a critical but stable condition yesterday.

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Popular Black Country journalist dies, aged 61



Dave Lawley with wife Hilary

A RESPECTED journalist who spent more than three decades covering the area where he grew up has died suddenly. Dave Lawley, 61, was renowned for his brilliant sense of humour.

A grandfather-of-one, he began his career on the Warley News Telephone, followed by a brief spell on The Evening Mail before joining the Express & Star's Cradley Heath office in 1977.

He worked for 30 years at the E&S

where he became deputy chief reporter of the Sandwell office.

He went on to be a press officer for Sandwell Council, and was a former chairman of governors at Tividale Junior and Infants School.

Friends and family have paid tribute to the 'larger-than-life character', remembering him fondly for his gift of telling a story and making people laugh.

His wife Hilary, to whom he had been

married for 39 years, said: "Almost all of the time, he was joking around. He was a really good family man and adored his daughter Rebecca. His granddaughter Isabelle was the light of his life and, talking to everybody else, he loved me to bits."

Former Express & Star chief reporter Ken Tudor, who worked with Mr Lawley, said: "He was such a funny man with an amazing brain. He would have made a great detective."

Mother of victim urges judge not to jail driver

"I STILL wait for Samantha to come to the door – but it doesn't happen," says heartbroken mother Deborah Jennings.

"I look at her picture every night, I can't believe she is not there. I feel like a part of me has died with her."

These are the heartbreaking words of a devastated mother consumed by grief since her beautiful daughter Samantha was tragically taken away in a car crash aged just 26.

But, despite still mourning for her precious girl, Mrs Jennings has bravely shown mercy to Samantha's boyfriend, the man who caused her death.

At Worcester Crown Court last week she asked judge Patrick Thomas QC not to give Thomas Whitehouse an immediate jail term.

Cannabis

Whitehouse, aged 23, of Burns Close in Stourbridge, lost control of his Vauxhall car and crashed into a wall and then a tree on the A449 in Cookley in December last year.

Samantha, who was sat in the front passenger seat, was pronounced dead less than an hour after the crash at 1.15am.

Whitehouse had smoked cannabis but it was unclear when or how much he had consumed and he has no recollection of the crash.

He fractured his pelvis and both legs, one of which had to be amputated as a result of the crash.

While recovering in hospital in January he was visited by footballer David Beckham and actor Ray Winstone.

After pleading guilty to causing death by careless driving and possession of cannabis, Whitehouse was handed a four-month prison sentence, suspended for 12 months, by Judge Patrick Thomas QC.

Report by Alex Ross

During the hearing, Mr Paul Whitfield, prosecuting, said Mrs Jennings did not want Whitehouse to receive an immediate prison sentence.

Judge Thomas said: "She (Mrs Jennings) has expressed a view as to sentence and is entitled to express that view."

"But she can't take that burden from the judge whose task it is to make it."

Mr Gurdeep Garcha, defending, said Mrs Jennings had remained in contact with Whitehouse's family since her daughter's death. At the hearing, she sat next to the defendant's mother.

Mr Garcha said: "They have comforted each other – it speaks volumes about her as a human being."

"She has found it within herself to forgive Whitehouse for what happened."

The court heard how Samantha, a care worker for adults with severe disabilities, had been in a relationship with Whitehouse.

She was the mother of two sons, now aged 10 and nine, from a previous relationship.

Mr Whitfield said: "They had a loving relationship and Samantha Jennings told her mother she was in love with Tom Whitehouse and he treated her better than any other man she had known."

But tragedy was to strike after Whitehouse had taken Samantha to the German market in Birmingham on December 8. On return, they socialised with friends in



Samantha Jennings was thrown from car

Stourbridge before going for a drive with Whitehouse's best friend Leander Mock.

While driving back to Stourbridge on the A449, Whitehouse lost control on a right-hand bend, mounted a curb and rotated, hitting a sandstone wall and then a tree.

Police estimate he was travelling at 76mph. Samantha was found 42ft from the car.

Mr Mock was found wandering near the scene of the crash. He suffered minor injuries. None of the people in the car were wearing seat belts.

Mr Whitfield described the effect of Samantha's death on the family. He said: "At 4am Deborah Jennings got the news of the tragedy, her expression was her life then fell apart. When the boys were woken up they knew



Thomas Whitehouse with Samantha



Whitehouse leaves Worcester court

something was wrong. They were sat down and told their mother had gone to heaven to be with grandad."

Mr Whitfield read parts of a victim impact statement made by Mrs Jennings.

In it, she said: "I dream of what happened to Samantha, she is in my head every day, everything reminds me of her."

"A mother should never have to bury her child."

Drug deal brothers in 70mph car chase

A PAIR of drug-dealing brothers from Dudley who were caught after a police car chase ended in a crash have been jailed.

Shairaz and Shahbaz Hussain were on the police wanted list, not for drugs offences but for the suspected kidnap of a 17-year-old girl, Stafford Crown Court heard.

Officers on patrol in Dudley on April 5 spotted them in an Audi and pursued them at speeds of up to 70mph along roads with a 30mph speed limit.

Deals

The chase ended in Himley Road when the Audi clipped a Mercedes car driven by a woman in her 70s. Shairaz, who was driving, lost control and the car left the road.

Police searched the vehicle and found a cache of drugs on the passenger side – crack cocaine and heroin with a street value of between £300 and £400. Judge Amjad Nawaz said the drugs were packaged in 'street-sized deals, ready for sale'.

Shairaz Hussain, 25, of Himley Road, Dudley was jailed for 63 months after admitting two charges of possessing drugs with intent to supply, aggravated vehicle taking and dangerous driving. He was banned from driving for two years.

His brother, Shahbaz, 28, of the same address, who also admitted two drugs offences and was jailed for 53 months.

Both brothers admitted a charge of common assault on the teenager.

The court heard they had bundled her into a car when she came to their home on January 17. The defendants initially faced a charge of kidnap but the judge recorded a verdict of not guilty on that count.

Festive brass concert time

MEMBERS of Halesowen Brass Band will be inspiring Cradley people to get into the Christmas spirit with music this Sunday evening.

They are presenting a programme of seasonal music at Overend Methodist Mission from 6pm, followed by mince pies and coffee.

Children from Overend's Messy Church have made festive cheer displayed in Windmill Hill shop windows.

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Hospital scheme is back on track

A LONG-AWAITED £370 million 'super hospital' has moved a step closer after health bosses gave the plans their approval – for the second time.

The board at Sandwell and West Birmingham Hospitals Trust had to reconsider the business case for the Midland Metropolitan Hospital scheme, after a series of delays.

Planning permission for the scheme, on land off Grove Lane in Smethwick, had to be reapplied for. This followed delays arising from a government review of private finance initiative contracts and was further complicated by the hospital trust's application for foundation trust status.

The board initially approved the business case for the scheme on September 30, 2010, but time taken to deal with a restructure in the NHS meant they had to look again at the proposals.

Trust chief executive Toby Lewis said: "It was important to make sure that our plans for Rowley Regis, Sandwell, Birmingham Treatment Centre and the Midland Metropolitan Hospital still remain, in the judgment of the board, the right solution for local residents."

"We have concluded that they do remain a safe and economic balance, of transferring significant amounts of care into people's homes, with securing concentrated expertise for the most acutely unwell patients within a new super hospital in Smethwick."

The business case for the scheme will be considered by the NHS Trust Development Authority early in 2014.

Man, 24, in court after gun found

A MAN has appeared in court charged with firearm and drugs offences following a raid on a house in Dudley.

Officers searched an address on Corser Street on November 28 finding drugs and a loaded 9mm pistol, a silencer, ammunition, mobile phones and cash. Wolverhampton Magistrates' Court heard on Saturday.

Stefan Rattray, 24, of Attingham Drive, Eve Hill, faces nine charges.

He was remanded in custody to appear at the court again on March 3.

Family tributes to GP who died after crash



Dr Liz Pope – 'terrible loss'

THE family of a GP who died hours after declining hospital treatment when her car overturned in a crash has paid tribute to a 'much loved' wife, daughter, sister, aunt and friend.

Dr Elizabeth Pope, 38, died just hours after the accident near Halfpenny Green on November 27. Her car, an Alfa Romeo Giulietta, overturned but she chose to go home rather than hospital after being assessed at the scene by emergency services. She had appeared 'relatively uninjured' but died at her home in Claverley within two hours.

Despite being diagnosed with a hole in the heart six years ago and later with thyroid cancer, which saw the removal of her thyroid gland, she played hockey, went horse riding and was a keen gardener with her husband Trevor.

She volunteered for the London 2012 Olympics, where she was appointed to the Olympic Village GP group, helping many athletes

and others. Her family said her death had 'left the world a much darker place'.

They said: "We are so very grateful we have been able to share in the life of this lovely, happy and energetic person who lit up our world, who loved us and whom we love."

Enthusiastic

"As we acknowledge with her death a light has gone out in our world, we also know for Liz the true light is still shining and the darkness has not extinguished it. May Liz rest in peace and rise in glory."

Stoke-born Dr Pope was described as an enthusiastic sportswoman and a devoted Christian. She studied medicine at Leicester University and after graduating married Trevor Pope, from Bridgnorth, and lived in Tasley.

Her career took her to Shrewsbury Royal Infir-

mary before moving to Somerset where she worked as a GP.

She moved back to Shropshire seven years ago and became a GP partner in the Three Villages Medical Practice for Amblecote and Wollaston.

A statement for Three Villages practice said: "Her commitment and enthusiasm for the practice, patients and her wider professional interests was infectious. She will be very sadly missed by her colleagues, patients and her many friends. Our thoughts are with her family at this painful time as we all try to come to terms with her untimely loss."

Dr David Hegarty, chairman of Dudley Clinical Commissioning Group, added: "Our CCG and the GP community has suffered a terrible loss. Liz not only showed tremendous commitment to her own patients and practice, she gave the same commitment to improving the quality of care for everyone in Dudley."

'Smug' thug is jailed for beating up friend

A MAN who attacked his former friend with a tea cup over a row about tobacco has been jailed for 12 months. Sean McKnight repeatedly smashed the cup over the head of Stephen Bates at a property in Halesowen after delivering 20 punches to his victim's head.

Wolverhampton Crown Court heard last week that McKnight stood with a 'smug' smile over his face after the attack that took place in Vicarage Road on October 6.

And 41-year-old McKnight was to show no remorse in police interviews and when shown pictures of the injuries he had caused to the victim, in fact he admitted he wished he had done more.

Grabbed

Ms Rhiannon Jones, prosecuting, said: "The defendant and the victim Stephen Bates had been friends prior to this incident. It seems there was a dispute over the defendant's tobacco."

"Mr McKnight has grabbed the victim and pulled him to the ground."

"He then kicked him and started punching him. A witness said there was about 20 punches thrown."

"The defendant then picked up a tea cup and hit it over the head of Mr Bates until it smashed."

She continued: "He was described as looking smug as he stood over the victim."

McKnight was arrested and told police he picked up the tea cup because his hand was hurting so much from punching him.

by Adam Thompson

"He said in the interview he would have kicked him to the head more had he not covered his face," Ms Jones added.

"The defendant was shown the picture but was said to be disappointed at the injuries he caused Mr Bates said that he wished he had 'done more'."

Miss Geraldine Toal, defending, said: "My client accepts that he faces custody for this offence."

"He had lived at the hostel for about 18 months without any incidents."

"This is a gentleman who has had many difficulties in his life and he has shown remorse."

McKnight, of no fixed address, pleaded guilty to a charge of actual bodily harm.

He was jailed for 12 months by Judge Michael Challinor but was told that he would serve half that period in prison.

As he passed sentence Judge Challinor told McKnight: "This was a sustained attack where you punched and kicked the victim and you used a weapon."

"It was your intent to cause injury to him."

Bus brings down scaffolding



The scene after scaffolding poles were brought crashing down into the road and pavement in Dudley High Street

AN INVESTIGATION has been launched after scaffolding crashed on to a pavement and busy main road when it was struck by a bus.

A section of Dudley High Street was closed off for more than three hours on Friday after metal poles and wood were sent plummeting.

A man in his 40s suffered minor facial and knee injuries and was taken to Russells Hall Hospital after the double decker bus hit the scaffolding.

Metal scaffolding poles smashed through windows on the number 257

National Express double decker bus, shattering glass on the upper tier following the collision. West Midlands Fire service believe the bus, which takes passengers between Dudley and Stourbridge, struck the scaffolding, bringing it crashing down.

Paramedics

The scaffolding was in place near The Venue banqueting suite opposite the Church of Saint Thomas, known as Top Church.

Police, paramedics and fire crews were called to the top of Dudley High

Street at its junction with Stafford Street at 9.50am.

National Express West Midlands spokesman Jack Kelly said: "We will work with the authorities during any investigation into its cause."

Trudie Price, who runs Trudie's New Style in High Street, described the scene. "I just heard this loud bang and I went outside and the bus was there and the scaffolding was in the road," she said. Passer-by Tracey Wollam, 31, who lives off High Street, said: "It was lucky no-one was seriously hurt."

NEWS

in brief

Exercise class for older people

RESIDENTS are being put through their paces with a new exercise class specifically for older people.

Black Country Housing Group and Sandwell Leisure Trust have teamed up to provide the classes.

The classes are taking place at St Paul's Court, a BCHA sheltered scheme for the over 55s in Warley in Oldbury. The specially designed exercise class allows residents to take part in a wide range of activities.

A separate, weekly women only exercise class is also being piloted for BCHA and Blackheath library staff before being opened up to the wider community. The class will encourage social interaction and includes stretching exercises which are followed by a gentle workout.

Baggies players back HIV testing

ALBION stars Chris Brunt, Ben Foster and Youssouf Mulumbu have joined forces with a nationwide campaign to raise HIV awareness and encourage people to get tested.

To coincide with National HIV Testing Week, the trio featured in posters, videos and a new educational booklet for the national HIV awareness charity, Saving Lives. Around 5,115 people are living with HIV in the West Midlands.

Baggies skipper Brunt said: "The HIV test is just a simple blood test. You can ask for it at your local GP hospital or any sexual health clinic. It doesn't hurt and whatever the result you'll be advised what to do next."

Over The Edge wins best brew

A VILLAGE brewery is celebrating having one of its beers voted the best in the West Midlands for the second year in a row.

Judges at Dudley Winter Ales Fair at Dudley Town Hall gave the Campaign for Real Ale's West Midlands champion beer of the year title to Kinver Brewery for its 7.5 per cent strength Over The Edge.

Getting together for singing carols

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OF PETER
RHODES

SMOKING is the stupidest thing you can do. It makes you ill, shortens your life and steals your money. So why do so many Brits still smoke? Because the habit is as powerful as heroin. It is a compulsive chemical addiction which non-smokers simply do not understand. And while the NHS should try to help people quit, the very worst time to take away someone's fags is when they are in hospital. At a time of fear and stress people need their comforts, even if the comfort in question is slowly killing them. The NHS is trying to root out inconsiderate and unkind nursing, but the new proposal for a smoking ban inside and outside English hospitals would be plain cruel.

□□□□□□□□

THE truth is out. Immigration Minister Mark Harper says it would actually be illegal for the UK to limit the number of Romanians and Bulgarians allowed into the country. This is why David Cameron has been flailing around trying to slap a sticking plaster over the regulations by restricting benefits to migrants. The reality is that we no longer enjoy the most basic legal right of any nation, to control its own borders. So in what sense are we still a nation?

□□□□□□□□

INCIDENTALLY, does anyone remember Ted Heath mentioning a borderless continent when he lured us into the Common Market all those years ago? Was it ever explained to the voters by Wilson, Callaghan, Thatcher, Major, Blair, Brown or Cameron? The Libs, Labs and Cons are heading for a right old kicking from Ukup in next year's EU elections. And, for 50 years of lies, damned lies and betrayals, it will serve them all right.

□□□□□□□□

OVER the past dozen years, in the quest to rid Afghanistan of the Taliban and create a decent society, more than 3,300 Nato troops, including 446 Brits, have been killed and thousands more maimed for life. This week it is announced that Afghanistan's justice ministry wants to introduce public stoning to death as the penalty for adultery. Makes it all worthwhile, doesn't it?

Don't miss Peter Rhodes every Monday to Friday in your Express & Star

No closure but hours may be cut at centres

CHILDREN'S centres in Dudley will not now be closed after council chiefs made a dramatic U-turn in the wake of fierce opposition.

Council leader David Sparks said that no centres in the borough would shut in the 'foreseeable future'. But he warned opening hours and staffing levels could still be reduced as part of the on-going consultation.

by Heather Large

The council was considering closing seven of the borough's 20 children's centres to save £2.3 million. But the move sparked a wave of protests from parents of youngsters who use the centres, saying they are a vital service. Councillor Sparks said it had been clear from the consultation that there was strong opposition to closure.

Funding

"It's quite clear that there is no support for the closure of children's centres, in fact there is quite the opposite."

"Christmas is coming up and I don't want young mothers worrying about what they are going to do with their children next year. We are not going to close children's centres and we are going to have a look at how we might be able to build on their role in the community."

Councillor Sparks said the funding gap would be covered by 'organisational savings' across the council such as staff restructuring and he could not rule out job losses. The council needs to make almost £60m of cuts over the next three years. He said that due to the council's worsening financial position, the way children's centres are run would need to be reviewed.

Conservative leader Councillor Patrick Harley said: "We

have said all along that if they got the children's services budget under control they wouldn't need to shut the centres."

MPs have also welcomed the U-turn. Halesowen and Rowley Regis MP James Morris, who joined a campaign to save the Tenterfields centre in Halesowen, said: "I am delighted that David Sparks has done the right thing, listened to the overwhelming opposition to the closures and accepted that the council's proposals were a terrible idea. Nobody should pretend that there are any easy answers, because budgets are tight, but scrapping the vital services provided by children's centres was not the right way forward."

Stourbridge MP Margot James tweeted: "Good to hear Dudley Council have withdrawn disastrous proposals to close seven out of 20 children's centres, including three in Stourbridge." Dudley North MP Ian Austin said: "I want to make sure that the ones that were deemed to be satellites like Sedgley and Priory will not only have their services maintained but will be strengthened."

Chris Kelly, MP for Dudley South, said the closures 'should never have been proposed in the first place.'



Centre saved - Parents Julie Pearson and Kerry Wicketts, front, are among those who campaigned to save Kingswinford and Wall Heath Children's Centre

Library is open after a revamp

A LIBRARY has reopened - more than a week ahead of schedule - after a £17,000 facelift.

Cradley Library reopened after maintenance, including repairs to the roof and redecoration inside and out.

The library closed on November 4 and was due to be back in business on December 9. During the work, Cradley Community Centre hosted a temporary library service.

Normal

The library is back to its normal opening hours: Mondays 9am to 1pm and 2pm to 7pm; Tuesdays 9.30am to 1pm and 2pm to 7pm; Wednesdays 9am to 1pm and 2pm to 6pm; Thursdays 9am to 1pm and 2pm to 7pm; Fridays 9am to 1pm and 2pm to 6pm; Saturdays 9am to 1pm and 2-5pm.

Dudley Councillor Stuart Turner, cabinet member for libraries, said: "It's great that the library has been able to reopen ahead of schedule and normal service can resume. Thanks to everyone for their patience while this essential work was carried out, and thanks to the community centre for hosting a temporary library service for us."

Festive market

A CHRISTMAS market will be held at the Railway Cafe, near Wombourne, this weekend.

The cafe on the old railway line at Bratch Lane will host the festive market on Saturday and Sunday, from 10am to 4pm, and will feature up to 30 stalls, all under cover.

Winter warmth

Children living in cold homes are more likely to suffer from asthma, bronchitis and other respiratory illnesses.

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£4.5m to be spent on a new care home

A NEW multi-million pound care home has been given the go-ahead to be built in Rowley Regis, creating 40 jobs.

The new £4.5 million care home in Harvest Road will be run by Sandwell Community Caring Trust and provide 62 beds and respite care for people with dementia.

Plans for the project have been approved by Sandwell Council allowing the trust to begin tendering the construction work.

Geoff Walker, chief executive of Sandwell Community Caring Trust which cares for around 700 people in the area, said: "We plan to work with local tradesman and get building materials from local traders to support the region's economy."

"This will be the final phase of replacing the three run-down care homes we inherited from the council back in April 2012."

Work on the site is expected to be completed within 18 months and 36 residents currently living at older accommodation at Grafton Lodge in Grafton Road, Oldbury, will be moved in soon afterwards.

The site will be monitored 24-hours a day by CCTV and will be equipped with the latest care equipment. Each of the rooms will come with its own en-suite facilities.

Hospitals will be recruiting more nurses from overseas

BLACK Country hospitals – including Dudley's Russells Hall – have resorted to recruiting nurses from overseas because of a shortage in the UK.

The Dudley Group NHS Foundation Trust is turning to Europe in its latest search for qualified nurses.

Meanwhile, New Cross Hospital in Wolverhampton, is recruiting from India, the Philippines and China.

A recent recruitment drive to take on 18 new nurses at Russells Hall Hospital led to just one appointment.

Europe

Paula Clark, chief executive of the trust, said: "Due to a national nursing shortage, the Dudley Group, like many other trusts, has been forced to look overseas to recruit qualified band 5 nurses with acute hospital experience."

"We plan to actively recruit from Europe in the New Year."

"We recently advertised 18 additional nursing posts but were only able to appoint one nurse who had the necessary qualifications and experience."

by Peter Madeley

The recent recruitment push attracted 79 applicants but only 17 were shortlisted as suitable for an interview. Many were then found not to have the experience needed of working in acute healthcare.

Although only one was taken on towards the 18 new staff needed, another five were appointed into existing vacant surgical posts.

New Cross Hospital aims to take on 170 staff over the next year as part of a £3.6 million recruitment drive.

But bosses say they will have to recruit foreign staff because of a shortage of qualified nurses in the UK.

Denise Harnin, director of human resources at New Cross, admitted taking on nurses from overseas could bring added complications.

Guitar heroes – in a Georgian style



Danielle Saxon Reeves and Mark Willets, who perform in Georgian costume as the duo Dodici Corde at Oak House Photograph by Paul Tombs

IN THE days of Pride and Prejudice, these little guitars may well have caused a flutter in the hearts of Elizabeth Bennett and her sisters – strummed by the 'rock stars' of their day.

Now the antique instruments are in the hands of professional musicians Danielle Saxon Reeves and Mark Willets, who perform in Georgian costume as the duo Dodici Corde,

Italian for '12 strings'. Danielle, aged 35, from Lye, and Mark, 39, of Blackheath, will be donning their period gear again for a Regency Christmas Drawing Room show at Oak House, West Bromwich, on December 13.

They will play pieces by Italian guitar composer Sor – described by Danielle as 'the rock god of the time' – and fellow countrymen Giuliani and Diabelli.

"Our guitars are early romantic antiques from the 19th century and are tiny – the size of a child's guitar today but the granddaddy of the modern instrument," said Danielle.

Tickets for their show, costing £12 or £8 concessions, to include coffee and mince pies, are available by emailing dodici.corde@yahoo.co.uk or by calling on 07807 199870.

NEWS

in brief

Advice meetings next in new year

THREE councillors have cancelled advice surgeries in their ward during December because of Christmas engagements.

The Quarry Bank and Dudley Wood representatives on Dudley Council would normally have held the events on the second and fourth Friday of the month.

Instead, the next surgeries for Councillors David Sparks, Bryan Cotterill and Jackie Cowell, will be held on January 10.

They will be at Dudley Wood Adult and Community Centre from 6 to 6.45pm on that date, followed by the Sheltered Housing office in Sheffield Street, Quarry Bank, from 7 to 7.45pm.

Santa hunt at Haden Hill Park

FAMILIES are invited to a festive fun day at a leisure centre on Saturday.

Haden Hill Leisure Centre in Barrs Road, Cradley Heath centre is offering free activities and fitness sessions at their Christmas open day, starting with a timetable of free fitness classes from 8.30am.

Children will be able to track down Santa in Haden Hill Park from 11.30am to 2pm at the free Santa hunt. Everyone that finds him will receive a gift.

For details call 0300 012 0121 or visit the website www.slt-leisure.co.uk

Crier's good works recognised

SANDWELL town crier Adrian Holmes has picked up an award for helping others. Mr Holmes started the role in 2011. Now, the Loyal Company of Town Criers has presented him with the Brenda Phillips Heart of Gold Award.

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NEWS FEATURE

IN MY VIEW

WITH
MARK
ANDREWS

BORIS Johnson says tackling inequality is futile because 16 per cent of the population have an IQ of below 85, meaning they will never be able to compete on equal terms in the labour market with the two per cent who possess an IQ of 130 or more.

Which is fair enough in theory, but I wonder if it always works that way in reality.

Suppose, for argument's sake that one of the 16 per cent with an IQ of less than 85 is born into the sort of background Boris comes from. Finest prep school money can buy, top public school from the age of 13, and then there's always the option of a bit of private tuition should those pesky O-levels and A-levels get a bit tickly.

Then, at the other end of the scale, there is one of the two per cent possessing an IQ of 130 or more, who goes to a 'bog-standard comprehensive' on a sink estate. 'Sadly, he doesn't pick up much from his mixed-ability classes because Mr Chips is rather preoccupied with stopping little Keanu from setting fire to little Johnnie's hair.

Which of those two youngsters would you say has the best life chance? Quite.

But he is right that the best way to address this unfairness is to invest in schools which give bright kids from deprived backgrounds a chance to compete on a level playing field with those who are privately educated.

Perhaps we could call them, I dunno, grammar schools or something?

HOW sad to hear about the death of Lewis Collins, better known as Bodie in The Professionals, at the age of just 67.

It also reminds us of a time when there were just three television channels, but a vast array of programmes you might actually want to watch.

During the late 1970s you could switch on almost any night of the week and watch a fast-paced, British-made action drama. The Sweeney, Minder, Van Der Valk, Shoestring, Target – all right, maybe not Target – all pulled in millions of viewers.

The stories may have been far-fetched, the effects a bit rough and ready, but who cares? The scripts were spot on, and that's all that really matters.

Now we have dozens of TV channels, and prime-time viewing seems to consist primarily of lone-deaf singers, minor celebrities trying to dance, and a bloke in the jungle who can't tell the time. And they call it progress.

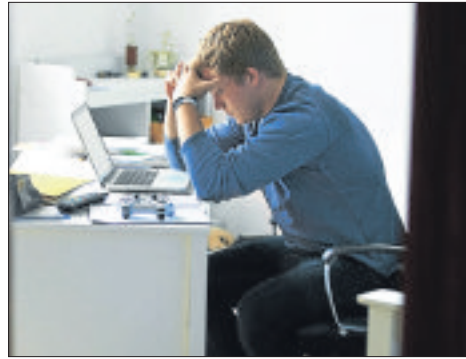
Contact Mark on Twitter: MAndrews_Star



Hannah Smith was a regular user of ask.fm



Simon Walters was bullied for having red hair



Anyone can be a victim of cyber bullying, but help is available

Tragic price paid by cyber bully victims

Months and years of torment of youngsters who are too scared to leave the house, as

CATHERINE DALTON reports

I WOULD wake up at 4am terrified of having to go to school. I'd make myself sick and stay at home instead.

These are the heartbreaking words of a teenage bullying victim, after cruel jibes left her too scared to go to school or leave the house.

For thousands of teenagers across the country, bullying is a real and growing problem. Some suffer days, weeks, months or even years of torment, leaving them scared and lonely.

In today's cyber-soaked society there is a new danger facing our teenagers, as figures show an increase in online attacks on websites and social media.

Teased

Last year, a total of 4,507 children called Childline complaining of cyber-bullying – an 87 per cent increase on the year before.

Now children are being urged to speak out about the problem, while parents are urged to keep a closer eye on what their children are looking at online. It follows a number of high profile cases of children even taking their own lives amid claims they were being bullied.

The family of 13-year-old Chelsea Clark, who was found hanged in the bedroom of her Wolverhampton home, say they found evidence after her death that she had been bullied online.

Her mother Margaret urged parents to be aware of what their children are looking at online.

Just recently, an inquest heard from Nigel Walters, whose 14-year-old son Simon killed himself at their home in Wolverhampton. Mr Walters believes Simon was being bullied and had been teased because of his ginger hair, which



Teenager Chelsea Clarke, from Wolverhampton, pictured shortly before her death

he had even dyed darker. He told the inquest: "He changed from being a happy, happy boy to, like, sad and disconnected. He would tell me nothing. He used to enjoy telling jokes and doing magic tricks. He had a good sense of humour."

"We used to talk with each other but he stopped talking to me and used to shut himself in his room. He just went quiet and wouldn't tell me what was going on."

In August, Hannah Smith, from Leicestershire, was found hanged. Her father said she had been sent abusive messages on social networking site, ask.fm.

The Latvian-based site allowed users to post comments anonymously and sparked calls for changes to the way it

concerns about their children being bullied online, a survey for the Anti-bullying Alliance revealed, while more than a quarter of parents think their child could be a cyberbully themselves.

The survey by the alliance, part of the National Children's Bureau, revealed the majority of children's internet use takes place away from the watchful eye of parents.

The research showed 32 per cent of parents in the West Midlands admit they have not spoken to their children about online safety. Less than one in five has set parental controls for web devices.

Almost half of parents even helped to set up their child's social networking site and 45 per cent of parents with children under 13 said they had set up a Facebook account for their child – despite the age restriction.

Luke Roberts, national co-ordinator of the Anti-Bullying Alliance, said: "Cyber-bullying is increasingly an accepted part of online culture."

Struggled

He said young people often struggled to identify what was inappropriate online behaviour and urged parents to learn how to protect their children.

"Currently there is no clear leadership, no co-ordination and no adequate educational model in place to tackle the growing issue of cyber-bullying," he said.

The Anti-Bullying Alliance is calling for a national debate on children and young people's use of the internet and their online safety in the 21st century, focusing specifically on cyber-bullying, which will bring together children, parents, industry, providers, NGOs, Government, and educators.

"We need to make cyber-bullying a thing of the past and ensure a digital future for our children that is safe, fun and connected," Mr Roberts said.

"It's a future where children take responsibility for their own safety online, but more importantly know where to turn for help when things go wrong."

THROUGH THE YEARS

1983...

A SCHOOL held a uniform amnesty to tackle an energy crisis. Codsall High School headmaster Geoffrey Bate told his 1,000 pupils they could wear whatever they wanted to keep warm after a strike by oilmen forced the school to turn its heating system off.

A DEJECTED Father Christmas was facing up to the prospect of unemployment after his decision to open a grotto in Dudley ran into trouble. Santa, alias Dennis Edwards, had been hoping to set up his grotto at Enterprise Shopping Mall in King Street, but discovered Dudley Council was also planning to lay on its own 'Space Santa' grotto.

WEST Indies cricket star George Headley died aged 74. The batsmen, who also spent three years at Dudley Cricket Club, notched up 2,190 runs in 22 Tests.

1993...

CONFIDENCE in political leaders appeared to have fallen to an all-time low, if a charity auction in the West Midlands was anything to go by. Signed photographs of Prime Minister John Major and Labour leader John Smith fetched just £5 each at the auction in Great Barr – while a jar of pickled onions was judged eight times as valuable, fetching £40.

PATIENTS awaiting major surgery were having their operations cancelled because Chinese flu victims were were swamping hospital beds. The intensive care units at both the Royal and New Cross Hospitals in Wolverhampton were full.

TERRY Cooper quit as manager of Birmingham City, just 18 months after guiding them to promotion. Cooper, who had got Blues out of the old Third Division, decided to leave St Andrews after coming under fire from fans at a 3-0 defeat against Tranmere.

2003...

A PETROL station in Wolverhampton became the first in the world to install a new anti-theft system which would puncture the tyres of any drivers attempting to make off without paying for their fuel. The 'stinger' was the brainchild of Oldbury inventor Jaginder Singh Mudhar. It had been installed at the BP garage in Stubbs Road, Penn Fields.

TELEVISION debating show Question Time was broadcast from Wolverhampton Civic Hall. Panelists included Constitutional Affairs Secretary Lord Falconer and former Chancellor of the Exchequer Ken Clarke.

PAUL Gascoigne's time at Molineux was over after just six weeks, after he admitted he wasn't capable of playing Premiership football.

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LETTERS

HS2 distracts from rail scandal

IN A supposed age of austerity, £50bn is easily and quickly found for duplicating long distance, inter-city lines that work so well already.

The real capacity issue is in the seven hours of rush hour from Monday to Friday, made worse by our two class trains that have spare capacity in first class.

Rush hour congestion can be relieved by re-opening the 38 miles of existing unused and underused urban rail lines. These 38 miles are the Camp Hill line, the Dudley line and the Sutton line. The Camp Hill line would make a big profit if a chord was built (a curved

section of line) to bring it into Moor Street Station instead of congested New Street.

The unused Dudley line has Merry Hill shopping centre, the Waterfront, Black Country Living Museum and Dudley Castle on or near it. This is financially viable, if properly promoted for these attractions and as a commuter route. Even if it makes a loss, a new regime of profitable lines subsidising the ecologically and socially responsible lines, must be brought in.

Walsall has many lines radiating from its centre. Walsall to Dudley and Stourbridge Junction remains largely

unused but is available for freight trains. This important 13.5 miles double track rail line has remained a wasted asset for over 40 years as road traffic congestion has worsened alongside it or, in its vicinity.

Fifty billions for the unnecessary, extravagant, flash, High Prestige 2 rail line but not a fraction of that cost for a southern or Black Country extension of the Walsall to Rugeley commuter line and, possible inter-city line. This is truly scandalous.

T WELLER
Hunnington Crescent
Halesowen

Heathens' fans put sport first

I ATTENDED the Heathens presentation night at the Cophorne Hotel in Brierley Hill. We, the fans of Cradley/Dudley Heathens, packed the place to celebrate the achievements of our Speedway club in 2013.

The prizes were presented by World Champion Tai Woffinden, who rides for the Heathens rivals - Wolverhampton.

It was a magnificent evening made even more so by the Heathens supporters giving Tai a standing ovation.

Could you imagine any other sports fans doing the same? Just wait until we get a track of our own. This is a plea for us to be recognised by the councils and landowners of the Black Country, to be landlords of a global success story.

Thank you to all involved with our success.

A BLACKWELL
Meriden Avenue
Wollaston

LETTERS to the Editor

POST

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Letters should be brief and MUST include name, address and telephone number of the writer. The Editor reserves the right to condense letters.

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Please don't force us onto unreliable buses

IT WOULD appear from your paper that those at Centro are the latest to jump on the band of pensioners' band wagon in proposing to cut the free local train and tram concession.

This will be yet another blow to those in the Blackheath and Quinton area who are able to travel in comfort by train to Stourbridge, Wolverhampton, Birmingham and further afield to Solihull and Coventry.

The only alternative are the buses, namely the 140 and 241, which are the WORST two services on the road, since they are frequently late or taken out of service, leaving people waiting 45 minutes or more for the next bus.

There were two other buses which used to run through Quinton, The Stag and Mucklow Hill but, in their wisdom, Centro diverted these services onto the Number 9 route which is already well served.

Whereas the buses are unreliable and resemble wind tunnels when somebody decides to open windows, the trains are frequent, reliable and warm.

These people at Centro should try using the 140 and 241 services to find out just how poor they are.

H SMITH
Greenhill Road,
Halesowen

Typhoon and debt ravage a country

HUNDREDS of thousands of people in the Philippines are still coping with the devastating impact of Typhoon Haiyan last month.

The British people and countries around the world have been unbelievably generous in their response.

Yet that country's massive debt burden means that 22 million dollars is leaving the country every day to pay off debts - many of which were inherited from the dictatorship of Ferdinand Marcos in the 1980s.

It's more than 20 per cent of the Filipino government's income.

Please support the call by the Jubilee Debt Campaign for the country's debt to be cancelled.

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CLUB NEWS

Get better soon wish for ladies

WOLLASTON E TWG

CHAIRMAN Jean Latham welcomed 52 members to the November meeting and read the list of apologies.

Two long standing members, Phyllis Dunn and Brenda Holmes, are quite ill at the moment, so best wishes to their speedy recovery were expressed by all members.

The floral art class enjoyed a day at Hampton Court Gardens, which was enhanced by the publication of a good group photograph in the winter edition of 'Townswoman'.

The coach pick-up point for Wollaston members attending the National Carol Service at Coventry Cathedral on Tuesday December 17 is Hagley Road, Stourbridge, opposite the Lex Garage. The time of the pick-up is 9.45am.

The carol service on Tuesday December 3, at Cobden Street Methodist Church, starts at 7.30pm, while the federation service on Saturday December 14, at St Thomas' Church, Stourbridge, starts at 2pm.

The speaker for the evening was Mr George Hook who gave an interesting talk on his family business, which had, since around 1820, been involved in making mother of pearl items.

The next meeting, which will double as the Christmas party, is on Tuesday December 10, at 7.30pm, in St James Church Hall, Wollaston. There is a charge of £3.50, which members can pay on the evening.

Thanks go out for top floral display

HAWNE TG

THE CHAIRMAN welcomed 40 members to the November meeting. She thanked Chris Hicks for the lovely flower arrangement that she had provided for the business table.

The arrangements and pick up points for the Coventry Carol service were given and the members were reminded about the Federation Carol service at St Thomas Church, Stourbridge on the December 14 starting at 2.15.

The social secretary gave the details for the outing to Wightwick Manor.

We will have a guided tour and after a visit to the gift shop, a light lunch. We received lots of invitations to various charity events at Dudley Town Hall.

Our evening's speaker was Mr John Billingham, a retired local teacher and author, who told us about the journey of Our Stour from Clent to Stourport.

We learnt fascinating facts about the geography of our surrounding area.



St Thomas Church in Stourbridge, where the federation's carol service is taking place

Mr Billingham then judged our corsage competition and declared Chris Hicks the winner.

Our next meeting on December 9 is our Christmas party.

Meetings are held in the Haven Room, Zion Christian Centre, Halesowen. For further information please ring 0121 602 6572.

Speaker Keith's a glass act

KINGS'FD DIST HISTORICAL SOC

THE SPEAKER at the November meeting was Keith Cattell whose subject was Light Fantastic - 1000 Years of Stained Glass.

He briefly referred to the history of glass first made by the Romans and Egyptians, and then by means of his large collection of coloured slides he

explained that the term 'stained glass' was usually applied to church windows.

The coloured glass was created by adding mineral oxide powders and the term also applied to painted glass that had been fused in a kiln. Showing many examples of religious themes depicted in church windows, from the 13th century windows of Chartres Cathedral in France to the modern window created in Coventry Cathedral, consecrated in 1962.

BISHOPS WOOD WI

COLIN McShane was our speaker on a bitter November evening. He took us on a virtual tour of his declared 'favourite island', Lundy.

The island sits nineteen miles off the coast of North Devon. It is only two miles square and has a permanent population of less than two dozen.

There is a Christmas Party for WI members on Tuesday December 10 in the Village Hall.

Visitors are welcome for meetings which take place at the Community centre, High Street, Kingswinford. Further details from Ron Julian 01384 295848.

There is no meeting in January 2014, by contrast February 3 at 7.30 pm sees Dr Paul Collins taking The Tram from Dudley.

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Book takes a look at Victorian shopaholics

SHOPPING habits from the Victorian era to the present day are the subject of a new book based on research by a local history society.

Selling and Shopping in Langley was launched at Langley Library, Barrs Street. It is based on research by Langley Local History Society into shopping habits and traders in Langley, Langley Green, Rood End, and Causeway Green from the 19th century to the present day.

More than 350 old photographs and 200 pages are included. It chronicles the development of the area following the coming of industry and the building of shops and houses to meet the needs of the growing population.

The arrival of gas, electricity, household appliances, wartime rationing, trading stamps, decimalisation of currency, and the redevelopment of the area all changed shopping in the area.

Individual shopkeepers are recalled in the main part of the book, including butchers, fishmongers, greengrocers, grocers, bakers, confectioners, cloth-



Dr Terry Daniels seen with his new book, *Selling and Shopping in Langley*

iers, shoemakers, builders, house furnishers, garages, newsagents, radio and television, doctors, banks, pawnbrokers and a few others too.

The book includes tables of shops

and traders in the main shopping streets every four years from the 1880s to 1940. The book costs £12. To buy it call 0121 544 8095 or email sales@historyofoldbury.co.uk.

Appeal made on robbers who pinned down victim

A POLICE appeal has been made to find two robbers who pinned down an elderly man during a raid at his house in Oldbury.

The 88-year-old was targeted by the two men who forced their way into his home.

After knocking him to the ground, one of the robbers held a cloth over his face, while demanding to know where his money was, as the other man searched all the rooms of the house.

The thieves escaped with cash, leaving the victim with a cut lip and a

bruise in the shape of a handprint. Detectives are now hunting for the two suspects. The robbery in Winwood Road happened at around 7pm on Monday November 18.

Investigating officer Det Con Mitch Buchanan, from Force CID in Dudley, said: "I am very keen to hear from anyone who may be able to provide us with more information about these individuals, who we know were young, white men."

"Perhaps you were in the area at around 7pm on Monday night and saw two people acting suspiciously in or around this area? These men targeted a vulnerable elderly victim; if you know

who is responsible please do the right thing and name them."

Officers from the local neighbourhood policing team have been visiting residents in the area following the robbery. Insp Lee Bartram, who covers the Langley area, added: "This type of incident is thankfully very rare. I would encourage residents to use door chains or other security measures when answering to unexpected callers, particularly during the hours of darkness." Witnesses or anyone with information should contact Det Con Buchanan at the Dudley Force CID Acquisitive Crime Team on 101, or Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111.

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Contain it

Do not visit hospitals or your GP if you have symptoms - call NHS 111 or call your GP for advice. Drink plenty of fluids to avoid dehydration.

Stop it

Stay at home for at least 48 hours after symptoms of Norovirus have stopped to reduce the risk of passing the virus to others.

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MEMORY LANE



Brierley Hill Alliance FC in 1964, before they joined forces with Oldswinford FC



Spring Meadow Cricket Club, gated off and neglected



Dudley Town FC, seen in 1985 at Dudley Sports Centre, where Castlegate is now



Wollaston Vics FC in 1950/1951 show off a cup they won



Brierley Hill Alliance FC, now home to an Asda store

Terry achieves his goal to recall memories of forgotten fields

by Andrew Turton

THOUSANDS play out their fantasies of scoring the winning goal in the cup final or bowling out the Aussies to win the Ashes.

And while the windswept fields and grounds where they dare to dream may be more modest than Wembley or Lords cricket ground, they still hold a special place in the hearts of those players.

Many works teams had their own ground while amateur clubs often had half a dozen sides playing matches at humble sporting arenas. As industry dwindled in the Black Country, many of those beloved grounds were sold off to become supermarkets, housing estates and shops.

Now one former player has revisited his old haunts to revive forgotten fields.

Terry Church, aged 71, has compiled a new book to rediscover many old pitches and grounds.

While many grounds were little more than park pitches, others were neat little stadiums. Mr Church, who lives in Wall Heath, was a keen sportsman who played on

grounds across the Black Country for more than 20 years.

"It has been a labour of love for me. I played for one or two of the clubs over the years. You would go to work on a Saturday morning then go out to play football or cricket in the afternoon. It was a big part of working life."

Mr Church believes more than 100 football and cricket grounds have disappeared in the south of the Black Country alone. One of his fondest memories is the old Dudley Sports Centre and County Ground, where the Castlegate Business Park now stands off Birmingham Road and Tipton Road.

It was once home to Dudley Town Football Club and Dudley Cricket Club, and Worcestershire County Cricket Club would also play at least one championship or one-day match a season on the cricket ground.

But after part of the land collapsed in 1985 due to the underground mines the site was condemned and eventually redeveloped. Other notable football grounds included the Round Oak Steelworks ground, known as

The Earls, off John Street and Pensnett Road, in Brierley Hill. It hosted many Birmingham Works League games through the 60s and 70s before the famous old steelworks closed in the 1980s. The ground had been used by Dudley Town but it was eventually sold off to be redeveloped as the David Lloyd Leisure Centre.

Nearby Brierley Hill Alliance had played at the Cottage Street ground but this was sold to Asda. Oldswinford FC had played on pitches at South Road, Norton, and had been a successful side.

Some grounds remain as they were but stand neglected. Spring Meadow Cricket Club, founded in 1929, had been based in Spring Meadow itself before moving to Saltwells Road, Dudley Wood, and then finally to Garratts Lane, Old Hill. The club folded in 2006.

Copies of *Lost Cricket and Football Clubs and Grounds of the South of the Black Country* can be bought at www.wall-heath.org.uk or from Ashwood Nurseries, Kingswinford. Mr Church can be contacted on 01384 292170 or terrychurch@btclick.com



Terry Church at Stourbridge Cricket Club

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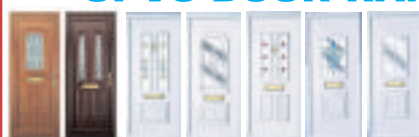
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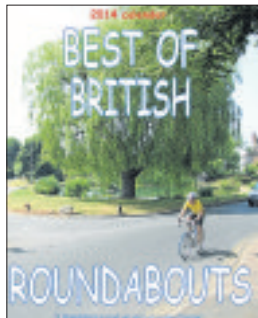
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NEWS

Traffic island goes full circle for calendar page



The roundabouts calendar's cover

IT IS one of the best-known sites of the West Midlands but rarely receives plaudits for its beauty.

But all that has now changed for Oldbury's Birchley Island, which has bagged a prestigious place in the Best of British Roundabouts 2014 calendar.

Despite having a power station in the centre of the site, the UK Roundabout Appreciation Society, have chosen a snowy landscape of the island, which is close to junction two of the M5 for its December page.

Sandwell Council has described the recognition of the roundabout, which is used by more than 92,000 motorists a day, as a 'true honour'.

Kevin Beresford, President of UKRAS also known as the 'Lord of the Rings' said: "Congratulations to the district of Sandwell for making the top 12 one-way gyratory list in our world wide famous 'Best of British Round-

Who would have thought that Birchley Island would feature in a calendar?

by Lisa Wright

abouts' calendar 2014.

"The UK Roundabout Appreciation Society all agreed that the electrifying power station roundabout, thoroughly deserved the prestigious December page in our popular calendar.

"I personally feel this dramatic and unique traffic island set in a snowy landscape perfectly sums up all what is great about the great British roundabout."

The society was formed in 2003 and started off highlighting the roundabouts of Redditch.

Expressive

That then spawned the Best of British and each year it has grown.

"People send in photographs from all around the world," added Mr Beresford. "Obviously, beauty is in the eye of the beholder. A lot are what we call Titchmarshes or Monty Dons - islands in full bloom.

"The whole beauty of a roundabout

is that they are expressive, you can put anything on a roundabout and any local council that is brimming with civic pride can stick a garden in the middle of a road junction.

They lift our spirits on a long journey," he said. The accolade is a thumbs-up for Sandwell Council who spent £450,000 on a revamp three years ago to make it appear more welcoming, planting shrubbery and installing a giant steel 'Welcome to Sandwell' sign.

However, the authority is now proposing to run a road through the middle of it to create a 'hamburger' island, in an effort to ease congestion.

But Mr Beresford said: "As long as they preserve the beauty of it I don't see a problem."

Sandwell Council deputy leader Councillor Steve Eling said: "The December view in the calendar of Birchley Island must be a true honour for the borough, with the picture clearly showing the Sandwell signage."

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Venture Way
Brierley Hill
DY5 1RU

Saturday 30th November
12pm to 4pm
Brierley Hill Lights Switch On & Christmas Fair
Insight House
Pearson Street
Brierley Hill, DY5 3BL

Thursday 12th December
12pm to 2pm
Dudley Council Plus
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Dudley
DY1 1LQ

Thursday 12th December
6.30pm to 8pm
Stourbridge Town Hall
Crown Lane
Stourbridge
West Midlands
DY8 1YE

Tuesday 17th December
6.30pm to 8pm
Main Hall
Dudley College
The Broadway
Dudley
DY1 4AS

If you can't make it to one of these meetings, don't worry - there are other ways for you to find out more and have your say. Please see our website at www.dudleyccg.nhs.uk/urgent-care for more information, or ring us on 01384 322777.

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- Making sure that all urgent care services work together more effectively for patients - including GP services at evenings and weekends and the 111 telephone helpline.

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NEWS

Lights, camera, action at museum



Actors Charlie De'ath and Jennie Jacques filming the new series of drama WPC56 at the Black Country Living Museum

AN EERIE silence befalls the old street of the Black Country Living Museum.

A dishevelled-looking man shambles along the pavement, briefly colliding with a lamp post before continuing his progress. The driver of a burgundy Morris Traveller revs the engine before driving down the embankment – a clapperboard slams shut and normal chatter resumes.

Filming for a second series of the BBC1 crime drama WPC56 was taking place at the Dudley museum this week, eight months after the show first went on air in March.

Actress Jennie Jacques, who plays the lead role of WPC Gina Dawson, and Charles De'ath who as Sgt Sidney Fenton is her on-screen nemesis, were among the cast members filming

scenes in the museum's 1930s-style street. Scenes were also filmed along the museum's canal arm, with the familiar cast-iron bridge forming the backdrop.

Series producer Mike Hobson described the museum as the 'Midlands own Hollywood back lot', saying he hoped people would enjoy seeing familiar locations when the show airs.

Sexist

WPC56 is set in the fictitious West Midlands town of Brinford in the mid-1950s, where Gina Dawson is the first female officer in the local police force, and has to deal with sexist attitudes of colleagues, Sgt Fenton in particular.

De'ath, who plays Fenton, said it was wonderful being back at the museum again, having not only been at the

attraction for the filming of the first series, but also in a film which was made at the museum in the 1990s.

"I was here about 20 years ago when I appeared in a film called the Feast of July, a Merchant Ivory period drama," he said. "It is a wonderful place, and it has grown so much since then, there is so much more here now."

"I love being in the West Midlands, the people are so friendly."

In recent years the museum has been used as a location for a number of period dramas, most notably the recent gangster series Peaky Blinders, and also jazz-age murder mystery Dancing on the Edge, which starred Hollywood actors Jacqueline Bisset, Anthony Head and John Goodman.

WPC56 producer Carol Harding said it was a superb location for filming.

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Dawn Betteridge
Headteacher



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Tel: 01384 818895
Headteacher: Mrs Dawn Betteridge

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NEWS

Secret of tunnels is discovered as huge drug farm unearthed

A MASSIVE underground cannabis farm has been unearthed at historic Drakelow Tunnels - 885 plants were seized with a potential to create drugs with a street value of £750,000.

Around 30 police officers, including dog handlers, swooped on the former nuclear bunker site, in the shadow of the Kinver Edge, at Wolverley.

Hydroponic

They discovered a network of hydroponic equipment, including heating, lighting and ventilation fans, as well as the plants, when they swooped at around 9am on November 27.

Earlier, officers from West Mercia and Warwickshire Police executed a search warrant in a dawn swoop on an address in Kidderminster, where a 45-year-old man was arrested on suspicion of money laundering and being concerned in the production and supply of controlled drugs.

A quantity of cash was also seized at that

property. He has been released on police bail until the New Year.

North Worcestershire police Superintendent Kevin Purcell said: "While executing the warrant at Drakelow Tunnels we discovered a large and sophisticated cannabis growing operation and although the plants will need to be tested it would appear that this seizure has prevented a large quantity of illegal drugs ending up on the streets. That in itself is a very positive outcome."

The tunnels have for decades housed dark secrets - from being a mysterious government nuclear bunker to, more recently, hosting ghost hunts in the dead of night.

Drakelow Tunnels were used to manufacture machine parts during the Second World War and during the Cold War the site was designated a centre for local government leaders in the event of a nuclear attack.

Workers from Western Power dug up and disconnected a suspected illegal electricity supply to the tunnels complex.

Anyone with information is urged to call 101. Details can also be left anonymously at Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111.

From nuclear bunker to scene of the crime



The forbidding entrance to Drakelow Tunnels, near Kinver



Inside one of the tunnels that makes up the labyrinth beneath Kingsford Country Park

NOW there is a new chapter to go down in the folklore of the mysterious Drakelow Tunnels.

The vast network of tunnels beneath Kingsford Country Park, on the fringe of Kinver Edge, has been uncovered as a drug farm.

Neighbours in Drakelow Lane, Wolverley, have been shocked. One woman, who did not wish to be named, said: "A neighbour phoned me about 9.30am and asked what I'd been up to as there were police down the lane."

"Then I saw police and dogs, a riot van, four or five marked cars, four unmarked cars and police racing around the compound. A guy from the electricity company then knocked at the door and said someone had been up to no good in the tunnels - they'd been growing cannabis."

Drakelow Tunnels used to be a manufacturing base for machine parts during the Second World War and was designated a 'regional seat of government' in the event of nuclear attack during the Cold War.

Glimpse

In a rare glimpse behind the scenes given to The Chronicle's sister newspaper the Express & Star at the tunnels recently, electrical vehicles used to move components could still be seen, as well as a sickbay and a security booth.

Close by is the 'BBC Room', from which broadcasts would have been made telling people what was happening after a nuclear attack. A control desk is still in place, along with telephones from the 1960s and 1980s.

The tunnels were designed by Sir Alexander Gibb and Partners and were excavated from the sandstone hills.

It was to be a factory for the Rover company, who were manufacturing engines for use in the war effort. Construction work began in June 1941 but full production did not start at the complex until May 1943. It cost more than £1 million to complete.

During the 1950s, the site was used by the Ministry of Supply for storage. The site was decommissioned during the early 1990s and sold.

Plans have been submitted by the company Quercus Ilex SA to create a museum and gift shop and to build six new homes in the grounds.

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NEWS FEATURE

Nurse's gift of life to niece



Nurse Maudie McHardy, a nurse in Dudley, gave one of her kidneys to her 19-year old niece Maria from Malta, after becoming heartbroken over her suffering after a previous transplant from an unknown donor failed

MAUDIE McHardy could not bear the heartbreak of seeing her orphaned niece suffer – so the Dudley nurse gave the gift of life by donating one of her own kidneys to save her.

Maudie, a leading nurse at Dudley's Russells Hall Hospital, endured a four-hour operation, five days on a ward and three weeks recovering at home – all for the love of 19-year-old Maria Agius. She says it was the 'best thing I ever did'.

Family

Maria's family has been hit by a kidney disease that killed her brother, Darren, when he was five. The stress of the loss of their son and their daugh-

ter's illness led to the deaths of both Maria's mother, Lucienne, aged 32, who was Maudie's sister, and her father Pawlu, 31. Mrs Agius died in 2002, two years after her husband.

Maudie, who was brought up in Malta, says it demonstrates the toll that such an illness can take on a family.

Maria had been on kidney dialysis for 15 years after a previous attempt at a transplant with a stranger's organ failed.

Maudie, 55, of Stafford, who is occupational health nurse manager for The Dudley Group NHS Foundation Trust, said: "As the years went on I became more and more sure that giving Maria one of my kidneys was the right thing to do. Every visit to Malta to visit

Maria left me heartbroken, everything she did was so restricted and she couldn't enjoy her life like other children her age.

"Her condition meant that she always felt tired, worn out and exhausted. Her growth was stunted, she had to constantly monitor her food and drink intake and she was constantly on dialysis. Maria tried her best to not let it get in her way but there were lots of things she simply couldn't do."

Maria, who has a rare genetic condition, had the transplant at Guy's Hospital, London. She said: "I have to take anti-rejection drugs for the rest of my life. But my life has changed completely for the better and I will be forever grateful to my auntie!"

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Hoax 999 caller is facing a £200 bill

A WOMAN escaped a prison sentence after admitting making three inappropriate 999 calls while drunk.

Janet North, aged 56, of Strickley Lane, Gornal, also pleaded guilty to being drunk in a public place after kicking a newspaper kiosk in Dudley town centre.

Dudley Magistrates' Court heard how North made three calls to police dialling 999 using a mobile phone on September 26. After arrest, she told police she did not know why she made the calls.

Mr Gerry Vahey, defending, said she had alcohol problems and was now seeking help.

District Judge Graham Wilkinson gave her a six-month community order with supervision and fined her £55. She must also pay £85 costs and £60 victim surcharge.

He said: "That call has to be answered. People like you who make calls when drunk clog up the system."

"999 is there for real emergencies and anyone who abuses it can expect to be severely dealt with."

He added that is she continued to abuse the 999 system, she would be given a prison sentence.

North pleaded guilty to persistently making use of communication network to cause inconvenience.

End of an era as Earl of Dudley dies, aged 93

THE 4th Earl of Dudley, who has died at the age of 93, was part of one of the West Midlands' most prosperous families.

Renowned for his good manners and courtesy, he served during the Second World War and in peacetime was a successful businessman as well as being a skilled amateur actor and poet.

Born on January 5, 1920, William Humble David Ward - known as Billy - was the latest in a family line key to the industrialisation of the Black Country. The Ward family had once lived in Dudley Castle and owned valuable coal assets including Baggeridge Colliery.

During the 17th century the Ward family inherited the title Lords of Dudley and, following damage to Dudley Castle during the Civil War, Himley Hall became the principal family home.

The Earl, who died on November 16, was brought up at Himley when the family then owned 30,000 acres in Staffordshire and Worcestershire. He was son of William Ward, 3rd Earl of Dudley, a descendant of Humble Ward, raised to the peerage as Baron Ward in the 17th century.

His great-grandfather, the 11th Lord Ward, became Viscount Ednam and Earl of Dudley in

1860. A statue of the 11th Lord Ward stands at Castle Street in Dudley, a symbol of the family's importance in the area.

The Earl's mother Lady Rosemary Millicent Sutherland-Leveson-Gower, only daughter of the 4th Duke of Sutherland, died in an air disaster in 1930.

King

During his early life at Himley, the estate hosted members of the Royal family. There was a close friendship between his father and the Duke of Windsor, formally King Edward VIII. The King spent his last weekend at Himley before his abdication in 1936. The Duke became young William Ward's godfather and Himley Hall also entertained the Duke and Duchess of Kent on their honeymoon in 1934.

He won a scholarship to Eton and, aged 16, when known as Lord Ednam, an exhibition to Christ Church, Oxford. A highly promising academic career was derailed when he contracted meningitis. His time at university was then interrupted by the Second World War. He saw action and was commissioned lieutenant in the 10th Royal Hussars (Prince of Wales's Own), his

father's old regiment. During 1942 and 1943 he was aide-de-camp to the Viceroy of India. He was wounded in September 1944 serving in Italy.

After the war, Lord Ednam joined the board of Round Oak Steelworks, which had originally been founded as the Earl of Dudley's Round Oak Works in 1897.

He became the 4th Earl of Dudley following the death of his father in 1969.

He was chairman of British Federal Welder and Machine, which had a plant in Birmingham New Road, Dudley. The Earl was also deputy chairman of Baggeridge Brick Company which was a subsidiary set up alongside the colliery.

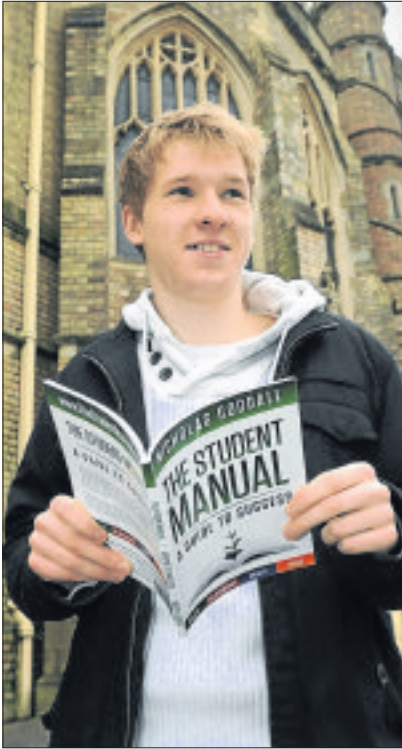
He had also sat in the House of Lords as a Conservative until 1999.

He was first married to Stella Cárcano, daughter of the Argentine Ambassador in London, and they had twin daughters and a son, Viscount Ednam, who succeeds as the 5th Earl of Dudley. They divorced in 1961. Later that year he married film star Maureen Swanson. They had a son and five daughters. Until her death in 2011, the couple continued to entertain their wide circle of friends at their home in Kensington.



The 4th Earl of Dudley - Billy Ward to his friends

Student guide



Sixth former Nicholas Goodall has written a guide to help students achieve success, sold via a website

RELATIONSHIPS, wealth and skills are among topics in a book written by a student to help other teenagers achieve their ambitions.

Nicholas Goodall decided to write the The Student Manual: A Guide to Success, to share his ideas and experiences with others. The 18-year-old, who lives near Bromsgrove, is currently studying mathematics and physics at King Edward VI College in Stourbridge.

Expand

He wrote the book over the course of nearly four months before sending it off to be printed.

A run of 2,000 copies of

the book, priced £5, has been published.

Mr Goodall hopes to expand on this in future and to update the volume as his own experience grows. The manual is designed to be a self-development book looking at four core topics of health, relationships, wealth and skills.

Mr Goodall said: "I am very pleased and proud of the book. I first came up with the idea earlier this year. I wanted to share my own experiences and also ideas to help teenagers unlock their potential. It can be used by any student at any college."

Mr Goodall has also set up a website for the book at www.thestudentmanual.com

Village gets off-peak train link after waiting 50 years

MID-WORCESTERSHIRE MP Peter Luff will wave off the first train of a new off-peak service being introduced at Hartlebury, near Kidderminster, on Monday.

Villagers claim that the launch of the first hourly off-peak train service in 50 years will help put the area back on the map. London Midland is planning to introduce the new services to and from Hartlebury, between 8.30am and 4.30pm. Trains had only stopped at Hartlebury from Mondays to Saturdays between 6.30am and 8.30am and 4.30pm until about 7pm.

John Rutherford, who lives in Hartlebury and is a member of Stourbridge Line User Group said: "The Hartlebury community has waited a long time for a proper train service."

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NEWS

Funding is available to back social care ideas

A £200,000 funding pot has been launched for community-minded businesses who believe they can make a difference to adult social care and support services in Dudley borough.

Dudley Council has launched round two of the Dudley Innovation Fund (DIF) to help people get ideas off the ground.

The first phase was launched at the end of 2012 when the council announced it was making £200,000 available for small enterprises, community groups and voluntary organisations. Money was awarded to several small enterprises including Dudley Centre for Inclusive Living, MDH Support and Bread2Share.

Since then the council has worked to identify where gaps exist in adult social care and services. Applicants for round two will be asked to consider how they can address these.

There will be three strands to the fund. The first element is Kick Start, which offers grants of £500 to £2,000 to develop or test an idea. The second element is progression funding which offers grants of up to £10,000 to implement an idea and the final new element for 2014 is the innovation bursary.

People will be able to get advice at surgeries taking place on December 10 in Dudley, December 11 in Stourbridge or Halesowen and on December 14 in Netherton. Places need to be booked on 01384 815875.

Decision due in new year over free meals on wheels

A DECISION on whether free meals on wheels will be delivered to pensioners in Sandwell will be made in the new year.

Sandwell Council is drawing up plans to benefit around 100 elderly people as part of the shake-up.

It is also proposed to expand the service, which would cost the council £200,000 a year, and it would allow residents the opportunity to pay for meals to be delivered to family members.

Council leader Councillor Darren Cooper has said the move will help ease financial pressures on older people in the borough.

Affordable

He explained that at present the authority is looking at whether the proposals are affordable and as the council works through its detailed budget he hopes to make a final decision on whether the service can be offered.

Councillor Cooper said: "We have looked at it, we haven't concluded that we are going to do it, it is going to cost £200,000 to do it, but that is against the backdrop of the massive cuts."

"I don't want to put something in place only to have to withdraw it because we cannot afford it."

"What we are looking at is the long term whether it is feasible for us to do it."

"We will be working towards setting the budget towards the end of January/February for the

by Lisa Wright

next financial year so I will be able to make an announcement on that then.

"We would like to do it, we really would, but it is no good putting it in and having to withdraw it."

Around 100 people in the borough receive meals on wheels which are prepared in-house by the council, at a cost of around £6 per meal.

The type and number of meals a customer receives depends on individual care plans and social care assessments.

The council has also been looking at how to expand the meals on wheels service whereby people can purchase meals for relatives when they are away on holiday.

Sandwell Council is being forced to save £100 million by 2017 due to Government cuts.

The council was initially faced with making cuts of £75m by 2015.

However, after the Chancellor's Autumn Statement last year, it was revealed the authority would need to make cuts of £100 million by 2017 – a further £25 million.

Fairytale visitors open grotto



Fairytale VIPs Lucy Evans and Oliver Watton, stars of this year's pantomime at Wolverhampton's Grand Theatre officially open Santa's Grotto at Dudley Zoo with a little help from Santa himself and from Echo the Owl

PANTO stars brought a touch of fairytale magic to the grand opening of a traditional Santa's Grotto at Dudley Zoo, watched by hundreds of children and their parents.

Former Coronation Street actress Lucy Evans and her pantomime co-star Oliver Watton visited Dudley Zoo on Tuesday to cut the ribbon on the popular annual attraction.

They have the lead roles of Princess Beauty and Prince Daniel in this year's pantomime at Wolverhampton's Grand Theatre.

They arrived at the zoo in full fairytale costume to meet with families taking a tour around the grotto, which has been given a Sleeping Beauty theme this year.

They were welcomed to the zoo by Father Christmas and barn owl Echo – with the bird perching on Lucy's arm for the grand opening.

Palace

Part of the 11th century castle has been transformed into Sleeping Beauty's Palace complete with an animal forest, antique spinning wheel and even a wedding scene.

The grotto will run until Christmas Eve with demands for tickets already high.

Lucy, better known as barmaid Lauren Wilson in Coronation Street, said she was very excited to open the grotto.

"This is the fifth year I have played Sleeping Beauty in a production. I have been asked to open a grotto before but this one is extra special," she said.

"It is not often a grotto is actually based in a real castle and that adds an extra touch of magic."

"It has been great meeting with everybody."

NEWS

in brief

M5 'wrong way' driver is caught

A WOMAN was arrested on suspicion of drink-driving yesterday after allegedly going the wrong way on the M5.

The 26-year-old was also held on suspicion of dangerous driving at around 3am.

She was allegedly spotted driving the wrong way on a slip road of the motorway by junction one for West Bromwich and was said to be twice the drink-drive limit.

Officers launched their Christmas driving crackdown this week.

Canal clean up needs helpers

VEGETATION was cut back and iron bridges were repainted in a clean-up along a canal by a working party.

The Coombeswood Canal Trust carried out the work along the Dudley Canal last month.

The organisation holds regular clean-ups along the canal between Hawne Basin and Windmill End.

Anyone interested in joining the tidy up effort should call 0121 5501355.

Train tragedy woman named

A MOTHER killed when hit by a train in Smethwick has been named as 37-year-old Kiran Salim Siddiqi.

An inquest has opened following the death of the mother-of-one from Wellington Road, Edgbaston, who died on Saturday near Smethwick Galton Bridge.

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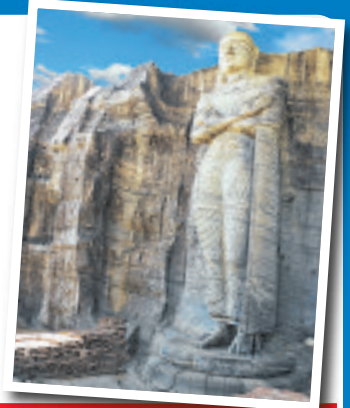
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One of the first adventures on the itinerary is the famous Pinnawela Elephant Orphanage which boasts a herd of over 75 animals from matriarchs to calves and their daily bath in the river provides a stunning photo opportunity.

Some of the other included tours are to the 600 foot granite tower called Sigiriya, or the Lion Rock, known for its ancient murals of 'cloud maidens'; to Kandy, Sri Lanka's last Royal capital; to the amazing cave temples of Dambulla, a UN World Heritage site; and to a well-known tea estate and spice garden, staying at the four-star Grand Hotel, originally the summer home of one of the Governors of Ceylon.

For a different sort of experience, two nights are reserved at the Safari Hotel, which has a pool, bar and restaurant overlooking the Tiffa Lake. Just 45 minutes from the Yala National Park this is the base for an early morning start to the jeep safari in the hope of seeing leopard, elephants, saltwater crocodiles, wild boar, sloth bears, monitor lizards and a huge variety of birdlife. The three-star superior Palms Hotel in the beach resort of Beruwela is the final port of call, allowing for two days of rest and relaxation before the journey home.



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NEWS

New town centre store gets off to a good start



Halesowen and Rowley Regis MP James Morris cuts the ribbon to open the new Londis store in Halesowen town centre helped by, left, Mayor of Dudley Councillor Alan Finch and watched by, right, Londis area manager Kevin Hoare, store owners Nav and Shiv Bawa

A NEW supermarket has opened in the town centre. Shiv Bawa said that sales were promising and they were delighted to bring the Londis brand to customers in and around Halesowen. Couple Nav and Shiv Bawa are owners of the Londis store which has created four new jobs in the town centre.

The store was officially opened by Halesowen and Rowley Regis MP James Morris with Mayor of Dudley Councillor Alan Finch also attending alongside Londis representatives and specially invited guests from the local community.

'Hypocrisy' jibe as councillors argue over benefit cuts

LEADING councillors have been accused of 'hypocritical politics' by failing to follow the results of a consultation when hard-pressed families demanded proposals to cut council tax benefits be scrapped.

But the Labour administration of Dudley Council hit back at their Conservative oppo-

nents for voting for even harsher cuts than initially tabled.

Thousands of households in Dudley will pay up to an extra £85 a year in council tax under new reforms.

Around 17,000 families would be affected by the changes which will hit those who get help to pay their council tax.

Tory Councillor Tim Wright, speaking at Monday night's full council meeting, said: "Talk about disingenuous politics, or hypo-

critical politics - the party opposite said they would go out and consult, and consult and consult, which they have done.

"Have they listened, no." It comes after the government scrapped the national council tax benefit scheme in April, leaving local authorities to decide whether residents should get money off.

Councils have been given a 10 per cent cut in funding for the new scheme.

Councillors drew up proposals on whether to absorb council tax cuts, or reduce payouts by either 8.5 per cent or 20 per cent.

Around three quarters of people who responded to the consultation demanded payouts remained at the same level.

But Dudley Council's leadership is pursuing plans to implement a 8.5 per cent cut to benefits payouts - with pensioners, disabled and children, pensioners and lone parents with a child under five receiving some protection.

This arrangement could be extended past 2015 but may also rise to 20 per cent.

Opposition Conservative party leader, Councillor Patrick Harley, said the authority should have looked at a cut of 20 per cent immediately.

Councillor Pete Lowe, cabinet member for finance, previously said the council had no option.

"It is frustrating and it is not something that we would want to do by choice but we have no option after the decision by the Government," he said.

Tip top tap troupe



Kate Whitewood with fellow fundraising dancers Chyna Chambers, Amy Whitewood, Chanelle Scarlett, Diane Chalk, Sam Steatham and Chloe Eve Hale

DANCERS put on their tap shoes to raise cash for a good cause with some learning routines for the very first time especially for the event.

Groups based at the Sapphire Dance Studios, in Oldbury, have been practising for four months to get their steps right for the tap-a-thon event held recently.

It is staged at dance schools across the country at the very same time as a record-breaking attempt to have as many dancers doing the same steps at the same time.

And groups at the studios raised £550 from their efforts which will be donated to Children in Need.

Teacher

Members of the adult group the Tappy Mondays learned the routine especially for the event. For many it was the first time they had learned to dance.

Other groups taking part were the Baby Ballet and To the Pointe.

They were all taught by dance teacher Kate Whitewood. The routine lasted for six minutes - the same steps repeated twice over with dancers performing to the Robbie Williams' song Candy.

Kate said it had been great to see all of the dancers performing at the same time.

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NEWS

New luxury cinema at The Mailbox

A LUXURY cinema will open at The Mailbox in Birmingham as part of a wider £50 million revamp of the complex. Everyman Cinemas will open a three-screen, 12,000 sq ft cinema towards the end of 2014.

The company currently operate 10 cinemas across London, the South East and Leeds, but The Mailbox will be its first in the Midlands. It will feature a fully-licensed bar with fine wines, beers and cocktails and food.

Andrew Myers, CEO of Everyman Media Group plc said: "At Everyman we select our locations incredibly carefully. We've been really impressed with the redevelopment plans."

Work started in the summer to prepare for a £50 million revamp of The Mailbox with improved public areas and a facelift for the shops carried out before the its relaunch in 2015.

Elderly woman hurt in robbery

AN ELDERLY woman has been recovering in hospital with a broken leg after being robbed on a Sandwell street.

She was walking along Park Road in Bearwood shortly after 11am on November 28 when she approached by a young man who grabbed her bag from her shoulder and ran away. The woman, who is in her 80s, fell to the ground in the incident. Her attacker, described as a slim, around 5ft 2ins tall, in his 20s and wearing dark clothing, ran towards Lightwoods Hill.

Care bosses look to recruit 50 staff for part-time roles

A NEW care company has opened in Sandwell and is looking to recruit 50 new staff. Home Instead Senior Care is based at Hawthorns House on Halfords Lane, West Bromwich.

Its bosses Ram Singh and Kim Brom, a former councillor, are looking to fill part-time roles. The firm says it wants to provide 'the antidote' to 15-minute care visits which they claim are 'unworkable and unacceptable'.

by Alex Homer

All visits will last at least one hour, the company has pledged. Mr Singh, aged 46, of Handsworth Wood, said the firm would match up carers with clients one-on-one.

The idea is to give the clients the most personal service.

It has the knock-on effect of allowing carers to match up their hours to their clients' preferences so it suits both people's schedule.

Needs

The father-of-two said: "By giving our caregivers sufficient time on their visits to client's homes we are allowing them to focus on the individual's needs, whether that's providing help with personal care, meal preparation, shopping, taking medication or, to meet one of the most important, yet often under-valued needs, that of companionship."

Mr Singh previously worked in IT, while his wife, who was formerly a councillor in East

Handsworth and Lozells, is a qualified pharmacist.

Mrs Brom said her own experience of caring for members of her family inspired their view of 'good care'.

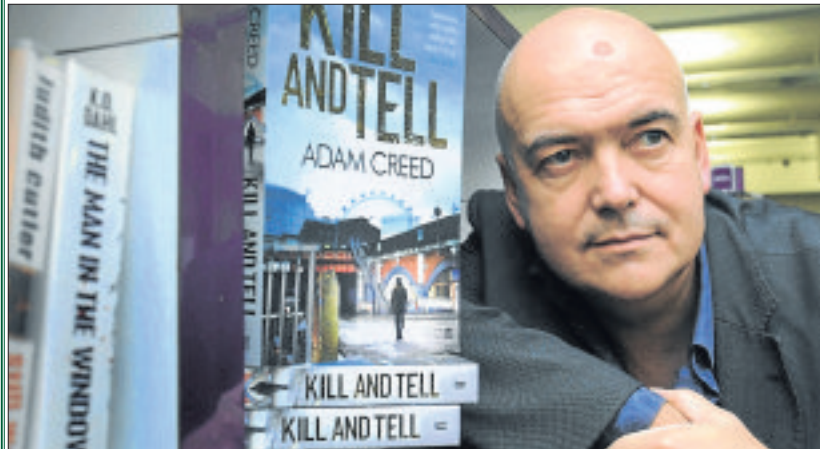
She said: "When my gran was very poorly we became only too aware of the 15 minute, one-size-fits-all service and it was very upsetting, we were lucky as we were able to care for her at home."

"We realised there had to be a better way and that's why we understand the value of well-trained, compassionate caregivers and the importance of allowing a sensible amount of time for their visits."

The company will provide services to people across Great Barr and West Bromwich, wider Sandwell, North West Birmingham and East Walsall.

For more information ring 0121 270 5650 or visit www.homeinstead.co.uk/greatbarrandwestbromwich

Write way for fans to meet Adam



Writer Adam Creed spoke to fans about his latest book Kill And Tell at a meet the author event at Oldbury Library

FANS of a popular crime writer had the chance to meet him and discuss his books at an event in Oldbury.

Around 25 people turned out to meet Adam Creed, the Lancashire-born author of crime novels including Willing Flesh and Pain of Death at the library in Halesowen Street. The visit comes as he prepares to launch his latest book Kill and Tell. Visitors not

only heard from the author, but also had a chance to get a copy of his book signed. Diane Edlin, stock manager at Oldbury Library, said: "We had some really interesting questions and a good discussion."

The Meet the Author event at the library is part of a new project to allow people to meet and discuss some of their favourite reads with novelists.

"The response we've had so far has been really encouraging," said Mrs Edlin. Previous crime authors to visit the borough's libraries include, award-winning writer Belinda Bauer who visited the nearby Bleakhouse Library at the start of the year. The next such event is due to take place early in the new year. For details on events visit www.sandwell.gov.uk/libraries

Pledge on blunders by health staff

STAFF at a health trust blighted by serious blunders in the space of a year are 'intensely frustrated' by the failures and have vowed to cut out the errors.

An external inquiry has been commissioned by chiefs at Sandwell and West Birmingham Hospitals NHS Trust to prevent a repeat of the 'never events', which include two in the last month.

But bosses have since revealed they have acted before the inquiry gets under way, putting in place a series of measures.

That move comes in the wake of the wrong patient coming forward for eye surgery – and surgeons going ahead with the procedure on the incorrect patient.

None of the patients involved in the 'never events' complained to the trust but medical director Dr Roger Stedman said he was 'anxious' to ensure safety standards improved.

Toby Lewis, chief executive at the hospital trust, was keen to stress that no harm came to the patients.

Wildlife campaign

AN MP has pledged support for a campaign against wildlife crime. Warley MP John Spellar MP attended the International Fund for Animal Welfare's 'Criminal Nature' event at the Commons. Robbie Marsland, UK Director of IFAW, said: "We are witnessing iconic species such as elephants, tigers and rhinos being brought to the brink of extinction."

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*The "from" price and price bands vary for each show – see brochure for details.

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Advertisement feature

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D6618 Hi-Fi System - Black
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GF666 Spare Stylus £9.99



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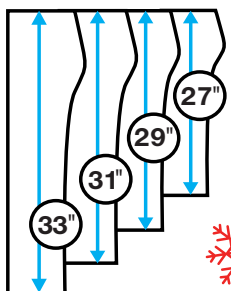
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Description	Code	RRP	Price
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Product	10.5 tog	RRP	Price	13.5 tog	RRP	Price	15 tog	RRP	Price
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Double	D5753	£42.99	£29.99	D6095	£49.99	£31.99	D6099	£54.99	£32.99
King	D5754	£54.99	£32.99	D6096	£64.99	£34.99	D6100	£69.99	£36.99
S/King	D5755	£64.99	£34.99	D6097	£74.99	£36.99	D6101	£79.99	£39.99
Pillow x 2	D5785	£29.99	£19.99						

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3" Double topper	D2308	£79.99	£59.99	5" Double topper	D6556	£99.99	£79.99
3" King topper	D2309	£99.99	£69.99	5" King topper	D6557	£119.99	£89.99
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Spare Bulb	D3948	-	£4.99

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D2676 60W Dehumidifier £39.99 RRP £49.99
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Folk getting festive with concerts over Christmas

THERE are a great many festive folk treats around the Midlands to get you into and keep the Christmas spirit going well into the New Year.

Angel-voiced Yorkshire singer **Kate Rusby** brings her ever-popular Christmas show to the Civic Hall, Wolverhampton on December 7.

Kate will be delighting her audience with a blend of traditional and local to Yorkshire Christmas songs.

The Magical Christmas Tree Tour will be bringing its own festivities to the Newhampton Folk Club in Whitmore Reans, Wolverhampton on December 21.

The club meets in the upper room of the Newhampton pub, Riches Street and tickets are £9 in advance and £10 on the door. The show starts at 8.30pm.

Distinctive

Award-winning Welsh singer, TV and radio presenter **Cerys Matthews** will be bringing her distinctive sound to the Birmingham Town Hall on December 18 and there is even some free folk thrown in the following day from Chris Tye who will be in the foyer of Symphony Hall, Birmingham.

Bella Hardy will be bringing her own award-winning style to the Newhampton Arts Centre, Dunkley Street, Whitmore Reans, Wolverhampton on December 20 as part of her Bright Morning Star tour. Tickets are £12.50 ex booking fee and the show starts at 8pm.

The Paul O'Brien Family Band will be playing together for the first time since leader Paul emigrated to Canada, at the Red Lion Folk Club in King's Heath, Birmingham on December 18.

The Dirty Old Folkers are putting on their adult Christmas pantomime Mother Goose at the Kitchen Garden Cafe, Birmingham on December 16 and will feature festive singalongs.



Kate Rusby is coming to Wolves



Cerys Matthews, Town Hall show

Tickets are £12 and doors open 7pm. At the same venue on December 18 there is a storytelling cafe which features, Christmas Crackers, Mayhem and Cheer. Doors open at 6.30pm and the stories start at 7.30pm, tickets are £7.

The Common Folk Club in Pelsall, Walsall is staging a Christmas Party with **Sons Of Professor Longhair** which features a bring 'n' share buffet or a donation for food on December 19. The club meets at Pelsall Cricket and Sports Club, Walsall Road.

Katie Fitzgerald's pub, Envile Street, Stourbridge will be staging the **Acoustic Brew Christmas Party** on Sunday December 22 in the cellar bar. The Lighthouse Folk Club, Halesowen is staging their Christmas Party on December 19.

The club meets at Rowley & Black-

heath Labour Club, Hawes Lane, Rowley Regis.

Meanwhile the Bromsgrove Folk Club has its Christmas party on December 9 with an acoustic night entrance is £2 for members, £4 for visitors and £1 for under-21s.

The Unicorn Folk Club at Wheaton Aston is celebrating its 28th Christmas with **The Deacons** on December 20 while Brewood Acoustic Music Club will be enjoying its festive celebrations with **Peter Kelly** and his wide range of songs old and new on December 19.

The Chase Folk Club, at the Foresters Tavern, Ogley Hay Road, Boney Hay, Burntwood is hosting **Gary and Vera Aspey** on Friday December 20.

Danny Farragher

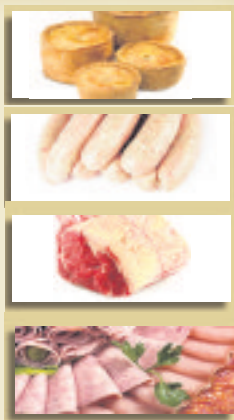


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STUCK in a dead end job? Living in a town you don't want to be in? Is there no escape?

The answer lies in comedian Andrew Lawrence, whose current tour reaches Wolverhampton's Slade Rooms tomorrow.

A star of Live at the Apollo and Dave's One Night Stand, Andrew has become a well-known name on the comic circuit since starting out 10 years ago. He won the BBC New Act of the Year in 2004 and has since starred in three acclaimed Radio 4 series, has twice been nominated for an Edinburgh Comedy Award, was shortlisted for a Sony Radio Award and is a double Chortle Awards nominee.

His current show is all about having nowhere to turn when things are not going your way.

Happy

"Everyone has got something they want to escape from, relationships, or work, and I have built my show around it," he said. "And there's plenty of audience interaction."

Speaking to *The Chronicle* ahead of his Wolverhampton date, the 35-year-old Croydon-born funnyman said he was happy to perform in front of 3,000 fans, like he has at Edinburgh, or 300, which could be the case at the North Street venue.

"I'm just happy making people laugh," he said. "It's such a lot of fun and I'm making a decent and comfortable living from it."

"Stand-up was something that I always wanted to do. I started out in comedy clubs and got agent interest from there. Even now I still go back to doing comedy clubs just to hone my act or to get used to doing the five or 10-minute slots."



There's no escape from comedian Andrew Lawrence at the Slade Rooms

However, he added it was now more difficult for young hopefuls to make the breakthrough.

"It was a lot easier 10 years ago. There are so many comedians doing such a good job and it has become a recognised profession so it's harder to make that step up."

Even as an established comic, however, Andrew was under illusions

that he has to stay at the top of his game. "You always have to keep it going, always looking for funny stuff you think the audience will appreciate."

Tickets for Andrew Lawrence's Slade Rooms date are priced at £15, or £13 for students. Doors open at 7pm. Call 0870 320 7000 or visit www.box-office@wolvescivic.co.uk

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What's On! Halesowen

Singer-songwriter breaks the mould



Sunjay Brayne – live album
Sunjay Brayne,
One Night Only

TO PUT out a live album you either have to be very big or very good. Sunjay Brayne, from Brierley Hill, is in the early stages of his career so that rules the first option out. Fortunately, he scores on the latter – he is that good.

The album made up of two sessions at the Woodman Folk Club, Kingswinford, captures Brayne's smooth voice and reproduces faithfully his dexterous talent with guitar.

Brayne breaks the mould in a lot of ways. He is a clean-cut Anglo-Asian, his mother comes from New Delhi and his father from the Midlands, and he has added a touch of blue to the Black Country. From opening track, Love You Like A Man, you will either be stomping your feet or you really don't get the blues at all. For someone who is only 20 his confidence on stage is impressive.

The album is available for £12. See www.sunjaybrayne.com

Danny Farragher

Festive classic to melt hearts of all who say bah humbug

It's Peace in our time

EXCITING Worcester-shire rock band Peace return to their adopted home city of Birmingham to finish their December UK tour in triumphant fashion in front of 3,000 fans at the O2 Academy on Friday, December 13.

The quartet made one of the most thrilling debut albums of the year with *In Love* and caused a stir with their appearance on Jools Holland's *Later* TV show. With a sound that is, according to singer Harry Koisser, "a bit 60s, a bit 80s, a bit psychedelic", the band met up at Worcester sixth form college and bonded over a shared love of Led Zeppelin.

Peace features Kidderminster-born Koisser brothers Sam and Harry plus drummer Dom Boyce and lead guitarist Doug Castle.

Support at Birmingham will come from Sheffield duo Drengé plus special guests.



CHARLES Dickens' much-loved A Christmas Carol aims to provide the perfect festive treat this Christmas at Birmingham Rep.

The new staging of the festive classic opened this week and runs until January 4 at the revamped theatre, which is now part of the impressive new Birmingham Library complex.

Family

Aimed at family audiences from aged seven upwards, the production will bring to life Dickens' heart-warming and slightly spooky tale of redemption and promises to banish all those Bah Humbugs with lashings of goodwill and Christmas cheer.

On a bleak Christmas Eve, London's meanest miser Ebenezer Scrooge is his usual grumpy self. His only act of seasonal generosity is to offer his poor overworked clerk Bob Cratchit, Christmas day off. But as the clock strikes midnight his world will be turned upside down as three ghosts give him visions of a happy Christmas past, a harsh present and a terrifying future.

Playing Scrooge will be Matthew Ashford with Guy Lewis as Bob Cratchit and Tania Mathurin as Mrs Cratchit.

The professional cast will be joined by an ensemble of local actors.

A Christmas Carol will be directed by Tessa Walker, who has directed plays for Hull Truck, Royal Exchange and Soho Theatre.

Dickens' story has been adapted by Bryony Lavery, who wrote the award-winning *Frozen* and has adapted Chekhov. Jason Carr contributed music and lyrics, whilst the job of recreating Victorian London has gone to designer Ti Green.

More seasonal delights follow when The Rep stages *The Snowman* from January 8 to 18.

There is an alternative at The Rep's Door venue where Bernadette Russell performs her own story, *366 Days of Kindness*. In response to the 2011 riots, she committed to be kind to a stranger every single day for a year. In a blend of drama and stand-up, Bernadette looks back via a dinner party where guests include the Dalai Lama, Aristotle and Princess Diana. It is staged from December 17 to 21.

REVIEW

Cabaret, Grand Theatre
THE giant letters on the stage spelt out WILL KOM MEN, quite ironic as there was one very important thing missing on the opening night of Cabaret at Wolverhampton's Grand Theatre – WILL.

Earlier in the day Will Young had had to pull out of the performance due to illness and the announcement at the start brought a general groan from the packed theatre.

His replacement, Simon Jaymes, who took on the role of Emcee, did an admirable job but in many parts his voice simply was not strong enough.

But if there was a very good reason to 'come to the cabaret' enter Lichfield-born Siobhan Dillon as Sally Bowles. This role was perfect for her and her voice and acting were superb.

The story revolves around an aspiring writer named Cliff Bradshaw (well played by Matt Rawle) who travelled to Berlin in search of inspiration when he met Sally Bowles at a cabaret called the Kit Kat Klub.

She moves in with him in a boarding house run by Fräulein Schneider (Lyn Paul – whose slightly weak voice at the start improved as the night went on) and her suitor, Herr Schultz (Linal Haft) a Jewish fruit-shop owner. As the Nazis grew stronger, everything was thrown into disarray.

Will returned on the Thursday night to finish the run.

Sue Attwater

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What's On!

SATURDAY'S TV 7.12.13

Listings supplied by Press Association

CHOICE



Robert Lindsay

Atlantis BBC1, 8.15pm
For those of us who grew up reading Greek myths, Medusa is a snake-haired Gorgon whose mere look can turn men to stone. But in Atlantis, she's the love of Hercules's life – and she's missing, having been kidnapped by cruel moneylender Kyros last week. Now he, Pythagoras and Jason are on her trail – and turn to genius inventor Daedalus for help; what he gives them is a sense of hope. Unfortunately, their efforts to save Medusa have to be postponed for a while after they become unwittingly embroiled in the brutal blood sport of the Scythian tribe.

BBC1

6.00 Breakfast. **10.00** Saturday Kitchen Live. **11.30** Food & Drink. (R) **12.00** Football Focus. **12.45** Saturday Sportsday. **1.00** BBC News; Regional News; Weather. **1.15** Live Snooker: UK Championship. **4.30** Final Score. **5.10** My Family Christmas Special. (R)
6.00 BBC News; Regional News; Weather.
6.20 **Pointless Celebrities.** Alexander Armstrong presents an EastEnders special, with Nita Ganatra, Rita Simons, Peter Dean, Todd Carly, Shaun Williamson, Lucy Speed and Shona McGarty.
7.10 **Strictly Come Dancing.** Tess Daly and Claudia Winkelman present as the celebrities hit the dance floor once more, knowing success this week will win them a place in the semi-final.
8.15 **Atlantis.** The trio go in search of the missing Medusa, only to become caught up in a tribe's brutal blood sport – where they themselves are the prey. Robert Lindsay guest stars.
9.00 **Casualty.** Fletch has to rescue a child from danger when two brothers are involved in an accident, while Sam realises the truth about her own relationship when she restarts a patient's heart.
9.50 **The National Lottery Live.** Chris Evans reveals the results.
10.00 BBC News; Weather.
10.20 **Match of the Day.** Including highlights of Manchester United v Newcastle United; National Lottery Update.
11.45 **The Football League Show.**
1.00 Weatherview. **1.05** BBC News.

BBC2

6.00 This Is BBC Two. **7.10** Film: The Stars Look Down. (1940) Drama, starring Michael Redgrave. **8.45** Film: The Captive Heart. (1946) **10.20** The Sky at Night. (R) **10.40** Reel History of Britain. (R) **11.10** The Life of Birds. (R) **12.00** Paul Hollywood's Pies & Puds. (R) **12.45** Paul Hollywood's Pies & Puds. (R) **1.30** The A to Z of TV Cooking. **2.15** EastEnders. **4.05** Coast. (R) **4.30** Live Snooker: UK Championship. The opening session of the second semi-final. **5.30** Pop III (R) **6.30** **Dad's Army.** Mainwaring and his platoon are put in charge of manning an observation post on a derelict pier, but they are marooned when their boat drifts away. (R)
7.00 **Live Snooker: UK Championship.** Hazel Irvine presents the concluding session of the second semi-final at the Barbican Centre in York, where the first player to reach nine frames will progress to the final. Subsequent programmes subject to change.
10.00 **QI XL.** Extended edition. Victoria Coren Mitchell, Sue Perkins and the Rev Richard Coles join Alan Davies as host Stephen Fry asks a range of unusual questions about knights and knaves.
10.45 **Film: Al: Artificial Intelligence.** (2001) A robot boy programmed to see his owner as a parent tries to become human, so the "mother" who rejected him will love him. Sci-fi drama, starring Haley Joel Osment and Jude Law.
1.00 **Film: Racing for Time.** (2008) Fact-based sporting drama, directed by and starring Charles S Dutton. **2.25** This Is BBC Two.

ITV

6.00 CITV: Babar and the Adventures of Badou. **6.10** The Cat in the Hat Knows a Lot About That. (R) **6.25** The Cat in the Hat Knows a Lot About That. (R) **6.35** Dino Dan. (R) **6.50** Dino Dan. (R) **7.00** Canimals. (R) **7.10** Canimals. (R) **7.15** Text Santa: Help with Hatitude. (R) **7.25** Sooty. (R) **7.35** Horrid Henry. (R) **7.45** Text Santa: Help with Hatitude. (R) **7.50** Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles. **8.15** Bottom Knockout Street. **8.30** Munch Box. **9.25** ITV News. **9.30** The Home of Fabulous Cakes. (R) **10.30** Murder, She Wrote. (R) **11.30** ITV News; Weather. **11.40** Surprise Surprise. (R) **12.40** Doc Martin. (R) **1.45** Film: Babe. (1995) **3.25** Film: Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets. (2002) **6.20** **Regional Programme;** Weather.
6.30 **ITV News;** Weather.
6.45 **New You've Been Framed!** Harry Hill discovers an illegitimate son and observes strange mating rituals.
7.15 **The Chase: Celebrity Special.** With Karen Barber, Dick Strawbridge, Catherine Tyldesley and Russell Kane.
8.15 **The X Factor.** The remaining acts have been in rehearsals all week and now the time has come for them to show the voting public why they deserve a place in next week's final.
9.45 **I'm a Celebrity Get Me Out of Here!** Ant and Dec send another camper home.
10.45 **The Jonathan Ross Show.** With Jack Dee, Olivia Colman and Ellie Goulding.
11.50 **ITV News;** Weather.
12.05 **FA Cup Football Highlights.** **1.00** Jackpot247. **3.00** The Jeremy Kyle Show USA. (R) **3.45** ITV Nightscreen.

CHANNEL 4

6.00 The Treacle People. (R) **6.10** The Hoobs. (R) **6.35** Anglesey Sandman Triathlon. **7.05** The Great Ethiopian Run. **8.00** The Morning Line. **9.00** The American Football Show. **10.00** Frasier. (R) **10.30** Frasier. (R) **11.00** Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) **11.30** The Big Bang Theory. (R) **12.00** The Big Bang Theory. (R) **12.30** The Simpsons. (R) **1.00** The Simpsons. (R) **1.30** Channel 4 Racing. **4.10** Come Dine with Me. (R) **4.40** Come Dine with Me. (R) **5.10** Come Dine with Me. (R) **5.40** Come Dine with Me. (R) **6.15** **Come Dine with Me.** Chris Newbold hosts the final night on the Kent coast, hoping to keep his guests entertained with his impressive motorbike collection and international menu. (R)
6.45 **Channel 4 News.**
7.15 **Film: Stephen Hawking: A Brief History of Mine.** (2013) Premiere. Documentary about the renowned physicist's life and work, from his schooldays to his scientific discoveries and 50-year struggle with motor neurone disease.
9.00 **Film: Unknown.** (2011) A doctor wakes up from a coma to find another man is claiming to be him, and any evidence of his real identity has disappeared. Thriller, starring Liam Neeson and Diane Kruger.
11.20 **Film: Neds.** (2010) Premiere. A studious teenager in 1970s Glasgow follows in his elder brother's footsteps by joining a violent street gang. Drama, starring Conor McCarron and Gregg Forster.
1.40 Stand Up for the Week. (R) **2.25** Hollyoaks. (R) **4.35** 90210. **5.15** Deal or No Deal. (R)

CHANNEL 5

6.00 Milkshake! **10.05** Power Rangers: Megaforce. **10.40** Sluggert. **11.05** Stobart: Trucks, Trains & Planes. (R) **12.05** Stop! Police Interceptors. (R) **1.00** Almost Dead: Scariest Near Misses. (R) **2.00** Film: It's Christmas, Carol! (2012) Fantasy, starring Emmanuelle Vaugier. **3.45** Film: Christmas Song. (2012) Premiere. Romantic drama, with Natasha Henstridge and Gabe Hogan. **5.35** Film: Matchmaker Santa. (2012) Premiere. Romantic comedy, with Lacey Chabert and Adam Mayfield.
7.10 **Film: Road to Christmas.** (2006) A woman hitch-hiking to her wedding has second thoughts after becoming attracted to a man who gives her a lift. Romantic comedy drama, starring Jennifer Grey and Clark Gregg. Edited for language.
8.55 **5 News Weekend.**
9.00 **The Bible.** Joshua lays siege to the walls of Jericho, Samson is betrayed by Delilah in his battle against the Philistines and David becomes a hero after defeating Goliath.
10.55 **Film: A Perfect Christmas.** (2012) Premiere. An advertising executive meets a mannequin that has come to life, and finds it has become her perfect man. Festive fantasy, starring Claire Coffee and Ryan McPartlin.
12.35 SuperCasino. **3.05** Blackbeard's Last Stand - Revealed. (R) **3.55** Wildlife SOS. (R) **4.20** Make It Big. (R) **4.50** Roary the Racing Car. (R) **5.00** Angels of Jarm. (R) **5.05** Hana's Helpline. (R) **5.20** Angels of Jarm. (R) **5.25** The Funky Family Show. (R) **5.40** Roary the Racing Car. (R) **5.50** Hana's Helpline. (R)

DIGITAL

BBC Three
7.00 Pop's Greatest Dance Craze. **7.10** The Best Sport Film Ever! **7.40** Top Gear Bolivia Special. **9.00** Russell Howard's Good News **10.00** Kevin Bridges – The Story Continues **11.00** Family Guy
BBC Four
7.00 Frozen Planet. **8.00** Shipwrecks: Britain's Sunken History **9.00** Borgen **11.00** Glen Campbell: The Rhinestone Cowboy **ITV2**
3.30 You've Been Framed! Christmas **4.00** I'm a Celebrity Get Me Out of Here! **5.35** Film: Small Soldiers (1998) **7.50** Film: Johnny English (2003) **9.45** The Xtra Factor **10.45** I'm a Celebrity Get Me Out of Here Now! **11.50** Fake Reaction **ITV3**
3.40 Film: Columbo: Etude in Black (1972) **5.45** A Touch of Frost **8.00** Foyle's War **10.00** Bomb Girls **11.00** Film: Gorillas in the Mist (1988) **ITV4**
1.00 Live Tennis. The Staitoi Masters Tennis. **5.00** Police, Camera, Action! **5.30** GT Academy **6.30** I Want That Car **7.30** Live Tennis. The Staitoi Masters Tennis. **10.30** Film: Scarface (1983) **E4**
4.00 How I Met Your Mother **5.00** The Big Bang Theory **6.00** How I Met Your Mother **6.30** Suburgatory **7.00** New Girl **8.00** The Big Bang Theory **9.00** Rude Tube. A countdown of 50 internet video mash-ups. **10.00** The IT Crowd **11.05** The Inbetweeners **Film4**
3.25 Anna and the King (1999) **6.25** Wall Street: Money Never Sleeps (2010) **9.00** Trading Places (1983) Comedy, starring Dan Aykroyd. **11.20** Monsters (2010) Sci-fi drama, with Whitney Able.

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What's On!

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SUNDAY'S TV 8.12.13

CHOICE



Anthony McPartlin

I'm a Celebrity Get Me Out of Here!

ITV, 9pm
On paper, it has to be said, this year's line-up of contestants in I'm a Celebrity Get Me Out of Here! didn't look all too impressive. But in actual fact, bosses have cleverly thrown together some of the most mismatched personalities the series has seen yet. It must all come to an end at some point though, and after three weeks, tonight sees the winner crowned. No doubt the not-so-happy campers will be looking forward to catching that plane home after umpteen stomach-churning Bushtucker Trials and challenges.

BBC1

6.00 Breakfast. **7.35** Match of the Day. (R) **9.00** The Andrew Marr Show. **10.00** Fern Britton Meets John Simpson. **11.00** Sunday Politics. **12.15** MOTD2 Extra. **1.00** BBC News: Weather. **1.15** Bargain Hunt. **2.15** Homes Under the Hammer. (R) **3.15** Escape to the Country. (R) **4.15** Nigel Slater's 12 Tastes of Christmas. (R) **6.15** Songs of Praise. **5.50** BBC News: Regional News: Weather. **6.20** **Countryfile**. The team is in Cheshire, where John Craven visits Jodrell Bank Observatory, Helen Skelton meets fantasy author Alan Garner and Jules Hudson explores the wildlife of Beeston Castle. **7.20** **Strictly Come Dancing: The Results**. Tess Daly and Claudia Winkleman present as six become five, determining the line-up for next week's semi-final, and Robbie Williams performs. **8.00** **The Paradise**. French businesswoman Clemence is back in town, and finds herself at the mercy of Tom, so Moray rises everything to be rid of his rival once and for all. Last in the series. **9.00** **Britain and the Sea**. David Dimbleby sails along East Anglia's coast to explore how the sea inspired artists, transformed architecture and created a uniquely British beach culture. Last in the series. **10.00** BBC News: Regional News: Weather. **10.25** Match of the Day 2. Arsenal v Everton at the Fulham v Aston Villa. **11.30** Film: **The Good Shepherd**. (2006) **2.05** Weatherview. **2.10** BBC News.

BBC2

6.00 This Is BBC Two. **6.40** Film: The Mouse That Roared. (1959) **8.00** Life in a Cottage Garden with Carol Klein. (R) **8.30** Life in a Cottage Garden with Carol Klein. (R) **9.00** Saturday Kitchen Best Bites. **10.30** Paul Hollywood's Pies & Puds. (R) **11.15** Paul Hollywood's Pies & Puds. (R) **12.00** Live European Cross-Country Championships. **1.55** Live Snooker: UK Championship. The opening session of the final at the Barbican Centre in York. **6.00** **Flog It!** Anita Manning and Adam Partridge value items including a Beswick wall mask at Sunderland's Stadium of Light, and Paul Martin visits Beamish Museum in Co Durham. (R) **7.00** **Live Snooker: UK Championship**. Hazel Irvine introduces coverage of the second session of the final at the Barbican Centre in York, where the first player to reach 10 frames will be crowned champion. Subsequent programmes subject to change. **11.00** **Hebburn**. Sarah is shocked when her dad turns up and reveals he has left her mother, while Gervaise is not best pleased when Vicki invites Lindsay to help him record his debut album. (R) **11.30** **Never Mind the Buzzcocks**. Rapper Dubbel Rascal hosts the comedy music quiz, with Jamie Cullum, Aston Merrygold, Foxes and Katherine Ryan joining team captains Phill Jupitus and Noel Fielding. (R) **12.00** Film: **Donkeys**. (2010) Premiere. Comedy drama, starring James Cosmo. **1.15** Sign Zone: **Countryfile**. (R) **2.10** Holby City. (R) **3.10** This Is BBC Two.

ITV

6.00 CITV: Babar and the Adventures of Badou. **6.10** The Cat in the Hat Knows a Lot About That. (R) **6.25** The Cat in the Hat Knows a Lot About That. (R) **6.35** Dino Dan. (R) **6.50** Dino Dan. (R) **7.00** Animals. (R) **7.10** Animals. (R) **7.15** Text Santa: Help with Hattitude. (R) **7.25** Sooty. (R) **7.35** Horrid Henry. (R) **7.45** Text Santa: Help with Hattitude. (R) **7.50** Victorious. **8.15** Bottom Knockout Street. **8.30** Fort Boyard Ultimate Challenge. **9.25** ITV News. **9.30** Storage Hoarders. (R) **10.30** Sunday Slide Up. **11.30** Sunday Scoop. **12.30** ITV News: Weather. **12.35** Inside the National Trust. **1.30** Live FA Cup Football. **4.30** The X Factor. (R) **6.00** **You've Been Framed!** Comical clips, narrated by Harry Hill. (R) **6.30** **Regional Programme**: Weather. **6.45** ITV News: Weather. **7.00** **Coronation Street**. Hour-long episode. Nick teases David to leave the Street. **8.00** **The X Factor Results**. Featuring performances by Leona Lewis and Michael Bublé. **9.00** **I'm a Celebrity Get Me Out of Here!** Ant and Dec follow the finalists' last 24 hours in the Australian jungle, reveal the results of the public vote and crown this year's winner. Last in the series. **10.05** ITV News: Weather. **10.20** **FA Cup Football Highlights**. Action from the concluding second-round fixtures. **11.05** Film: **Red Heat**. (1988) Action thriller, starring Arnold Schwarzenegger. **1.00** The Store. **3.00** Motorsport. **3.50** ITV Nightscreen. **5.05** The Jeremy Kyle Show. (R)

CHANNEL 4

6.10 The Hoobs. (R) **6.35** The American Football Show. (R) **7.30** Snowman Triathlon. **8.00** Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) **8.30** Frasier. (R) **9.00** Frasier. (R) **9.30** Sunday Brunch. **12.30** The Big Bang Theory. (R) **1.00** The Big Bang Theory. (R) **1.30** The Simpsons. (R) **2.00** The Simpsons. (R) **2.35** The Simpsons. (R) **3.05** Gadget Man. (R) **3.40** Film: City of Ember. (2008) Fantasy adventure, starring Saoirse Ronan. **5.25** Film: Home Alone. (1990) Family comedy, starring Macaulay Culkin. **7.30** **Channel 4 News**. **8.00** **New Secrets of the Terracotta Warriors - Secret History**. Recent discoveries about China's Terracotta Army, an extraordinary collection of ceramic sculptures unearthed in 1974 and dating back more than 2,000 years. **9.00** **Homeland**. Brody embarks on a high-stakes mission, but his fragile condition threatens its success, while Quinn makes an uncomfortable discovery about Carrie. **10.00** Film: **Hanna**. (2011) Premiere. A teenage girl trained by her father to be an assassin travels the world on a secret mission, pursued by the CIA. Action thriller, with Saoirse Ronan. **12.05** Fresh Meat. Vod's mother visits the housemates, Josie and Kingsley agree to wipe the slate clean and Oregon goes on a hunt to find the only critic who gave her play a positive review. (R) **12.55** American Football Live. All the action from a match in the NFL, as the race to reach the end-of-season play-offs continues. **4.45** KOTV Boxing Weekly. Artur Szpilka v Mike Mollo. (R) **5.15** Countdown. (R)

CHANNEL 5

6.00 Milkshake! Peppa Pig. **6.05** Roary the Racing Car. (R) **6.15** Fifi and the Flowerpots. (R) **6.25** Bubble Guppies. (R) **6.40** The Mr Men Show. (R) **6.50** The Mr Men Show. (R) **7.00** Roobarb and Custard Too. (R) **7.10** Bananas in Pyjamas. (R) **7.20** Make Way for Noddy. (R) **7.35** Bert and Ernie's Great Adventures. (R) **7.40** City of Friends. (R) **7.55** Little Princess. (R) **8.10** The Adventures of Bottle Top Bill and His Best Friend Corky. (R) **8.25** Angelina Ballerina. (R) **8.40** Rupert Bear. (R) **8.55** Ben and Holly's Little Kingdom. (R) **9.15** Jelly Jam. (R) **9.30** LazyTown. **10.00** Power Rangers Samurai. **10.35** Sluggert. **11.00** Inside Hollywood. **11.05** Cowboy Builders. (R) **12.00** Film: Help for Christmas. (2012) **1.45** Film: Dear Santa. (2011) **3.30** Film: The Goonies. (1985) Children's adventure, starring Sean Astin. **5.50** Film: Pearl Harbor. (2001) Romantic Second World War drama, with Ben Affleck and Kate Beckinsale. **8.55** **5 News Weekend**. **9.00** Film: **Robin Hood: Prince of Thieves**. (1991) An outlawed English nobleman recruits a group of bandits to fight for justice and protect the downtrodden. Action adventure, with Kevin Costner, Alan Rickman and Morgan Freeman. Edited for violence and language. **12.00** Film: **Wrong Turn**. (2003) Horror, starring Eliza Dushku. **1.35** SuperCasino. Live interactive gaming. **3.05** The Gadget Show Christmas Special. (R) **3.55** Wildlife SOS. (R) **4.20** Make It Big. (R) **4.50** Roary the Racing Car. (R) **5.00** Angels of Jarm. (R) **5.05** Hansa Helpline. (R) **5.20** Angels of Jarm. (R) **5.25** The Funky Valley Show. (R) **5.40** Roary the Racing Car. (R) **5.50** Hansa Helpline. (R)

DIGITAL

BBC Three
7.00 World's Craziest Fools **7.30** Top Gear India Special **9.00** Russell Howard's Good News **10.00** Family Guy **10.25** The Revolution Will Be Televised **10.55** Family Guy **11.15** American Dad!
BBC Four
7.00 The Bridges That Built London with Dan Cruickshank **8.00** The Review Show **9.00** Les Mis at 25: Matt Lucas Dreams the Dream **10.00** Film: Romanics Anonymous (2010) **11.15** The Bridges That Built London with Dan Cruickshank
ITV2
2.25 Film: The Little Vampire (2000) **4.15** You've Been Framed at Christmas! **5.15** I'm a Celebrity Get Me Out of Here! **6.20** Film: The Perfect Storm (2000) **9.00** The X Factor **10.05** I'm a Celebrity Get Me Out of Here Now! **11.05** Film: The 40 Year Old Virgin (2005)
ITV3
2.30 Agatha Christie's Poirot **9.00** Lewis **11.00** Blue Murder
ITV4
4.00 Duck Dynasty **5.00** Live Tennis. The Stailor Masters Tennis. **7.45** World of Sport: The Good, the Bad & the Ugly **8.00** Gareth Bale: Welsh Galactico **9.00** Film: The Boat That Rocked (2009) **11.40** Eric Burston: Sports Life Stories
E4
4.00 Film: Never Been Kissed (1999) **6.00** The Big Bang Theory **7.30** Rules of Engagement **8.00** Film: A Knight's Tale (2001) **10.40** The Inbetweeners **11.50** The Big Bang Theory
Film4
3.20 The Golden Child (1986) **5.05** The Brady Bunch Movie (1995) **6.50** Mission: Impossible (1996) **9.00** Terminator 2: Judgment Day (1991) **11.40** The King of Pigs (2011)

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What's On!

Film Choices

MONDAY

Public Enemies, ITV, 11.10pm

Fact-based crime drama following the last years of John Dillinger, whose run of bank robberies and daring prison escapes in the 1930s make him both America's most wanted criminal and a hero to a public struggling through the Depression. His career is soon to be cut short by the birth of the FBI, which assigns its most celebrated agent to bring him to justice. Directed by Michael Mann and starring Johnny Depp, Christian Bale and Marion Cotillard. (2009)

TUESDAY

Tyrannosaur, Channel 4, 11.10pm

An alcoholic unable to control his violent temper is struck when a charity shop worker responds to his verbal abuse with forgiveness. As they become friends, he learns she is trapped in an abusive marriage and takes her in when she runs away. However, his destructive urges continue to plague him. Drama, starring Peter Mullan, Olivia Colman, Eddie Marsan, Paul Popplewell, Ned Dennehy, Samuel Bottomley, Sally Carman and Sian Breckin. (2011)



Tyrannosaur, Tuesday, Channel 4, 11.10pm

WEDNESDAY

16 Blocks, Channel 5, 10pm

A burned-out detective is given the task of escorting a criminal to court to testify against a group of corrupt policemen – but what seems to be a routine assignment quickly turns into a deadly game of cat and mouse as the crooked officers try to stop them reaching the courthouse alive. Thriller, starring Bruce Willis, Mos Def, David Morse, Jenna Stern and Casey Sander. (2006)

THURSDAY

Matchmaker Santa, Channel 5, 3.20pm

A woman is thrilled after her boyfriend invites her to his family's lake house for Christmas, but is disappointed when he spends all his time working. She befriends his assistant, but is unaware that he is secretly in love with her until a twist of fate leaves them alone together. Romantic comedy, with Lacey Chabert and Adam Mayfield. (2012)

FRIDAY

The Fast and the Furious: Tokyo Drift, ITV, 10.35pm

An American teenager is sent to live with his father in Tokyo after a brush with the law, but soon becomes involved in illegal street racing. When he ends up owing money to gangsters after losing a race against a driver with Yakuza connections, he has to learn to master the Japanese style of driving to win and pay back his debts. Action adventure, starring Lucas Black, Bow Wow, Nathalie Kelley, Brian Tee, Kang Sung, Leonardo Nam, Brian Goodman and Sonny Chiba. (2006)

Pick of the Week

The stars come out to shine for a good cause

As you get older, it often feels as if the years pass by more quickly.

Or, if you're a showbusiness type, then the next Royal Variety Performance seems to come around faster than ever before.

Thank goodness, then, that it always features top guests guaranteed to keep us coming back for more. Okay, so some of them can be a bit on the cheesy side, and there have been accusations in the past that the show is no longer as relevant to modern audiences, but try telling that to the hundreds who see it live, and the millions who tune in to watch it on TV.

If variety happens to be the spice of your life, then this most spectacular of extravaganzas is likely to pep up a cold Monday night's viewing no end with two and a half hours of the stuff of which showbiz legends are made.

In fact, it could be said that if you're not looking forward to this year's celebrity-packed extravaganza, then there ain't no pleasing you, or that you're (snooker) loopy...

Yes, headlining the event is Chas & Dave, the 'rockney' duo who've been entertaining us with their unique brand of musical entertainment for the past 50 years. After almost two decades of silence, they returned to the album charts this year with That's What Happens, but we're hoping they'll be playing some of their old hits here.

It would be interesting to find out what Mary J Blige makes of them – she's also appearing, and we can't imagine that she's come across many similar acts in her native New York.

Gary Barlow, Jessie J, Olly Murs, Caro Emerald and Bryn Terfel are other musical performers on the bill, alongside comedians Jimmy Carr, Jason Byrne, Hal Crutten and Sean Walsh.

There are also special performances from stars of various West End musicals, current Strictly Come Dancing champion Flavia Cacace and Gareth Malone's new choir, Voices. And don't forget to look out for Attraction, the Hungarian dance troupe who won their slot on

the show by triumphing at Britain's Got Talent.

The whole event is being hosted by John Bishop, who's champing at the bit to take to the stage.

"As a child, the Royal Variety show was like the Grand National and the FA Cup final – it was something our family always watched, the only difference being that we didn't bet on the winner," says the Liverpoolian comic.

"To host a show with such heritage is something I never imagined I would do, and I trust my parents will be proud when they take their seats in the audience – although I have told my dad not to shout 'come on son'. It's not a match or a horse race!"

While the stars bask in their moment of glory, the reasons why the Royal Variety Performance exists and the charity it raises money for rarely get a mention, so let's put that right – it's the Entertainment Artists Benevolent Fund that benefits, and it deserves as much of a round of applause as the stars we'll be watching on the night.



The Royal Variety Performance 2013, Monday, ITV, 7.30pm

Best of the Rest

MONDAY

Fresh Meat

Channel 4, 10pm

Throughout the ages, for as long as there have been students, there have been student protests – and Manchester Medlock University is no different, for this week Oregon rallies her pals to take action when she's outraged by the deportation of a Tunisian fellow scholar. Of course, the fact that he happens to be a bit of a hunk is purely coincidental... Meanwhile, Josie has a bit of a PhD crisis, which results in her being held hostage by Sabine, and Vod has a particularly enlightening therapy session that far exceeds its bounds. And will JP ever manage to impress Sam? Not if his latest plan is anything to go by.

TUESDAY

Last Tango in Halifax

BBC1, 9pm

Celia is not the sort of woman you want to get on the wrong side of, as Judith (Ronni Ancona) finds her cost in Sally Wainwright's ongoing comedy drama. After suffering a load of doorstep abuse, Judith realises Alan (who's on the phone in the background questioning baby Emily Jane's newly christened name) and Celia are the couple who waited 60 years to get married. Talking of which, they decide to tie the knot again so friends and family can attend the ceremony this time instead of paying a copper and butcher to sit in. Meanwhile, Caroline (Sarah Lancashire) and Kate's (Nina Sosanya) romantic weekend turns sour, and their relationship winds up on the rocks.

Heston's Great British Food

Channel 4, 9pm

Fans of the culinary alchemist have had a long wait for Heston Blumenthal's new series, but here it is at last. As you'll have gathered by the title, this new run celebrates Britain's iconic dishes. Yes, good old roast beef and Yorkshire puddings are on the menu, but what batter, or better, start than fish and chips? With a dollop of inspiration from Henry VIII's chefs, he uses truffle, Madeira gel and sea urchin to create fake fish skin that will rest on a piece of turbot. But will he succeed in his goal of creating a bite-size portion containing the best bits from any chip shop?

WEDNESDAY

Sports Personality of the Year at 60

BBC1, 9pm

Back in 1954, when the BBC Sports Personality of the Year ceremony was first held, under 15,000 people voted. Now it's one of the biggest events on the sporting calendar. Here, former winners Princess Anne and her daughter Zara Phillips, David Beckham, Sebastian Coe, Bradley Wiggins, Paula Radcliffe and Steve Redgrave talk about their memories of holding the trophy aloft. Gary Lineker and Sue Barker also look back at tear-jerking moments involving Muhammad Ali and Bobby Robson. Whether this year's ceremony, which takes place next week, will live as long in the

memory remains to be seen, but the show itself is sure to retain its status as a must for sports fans for many years to come.

THURSDAY

British Comedy Awards 2013

Channel 4, 9pm

There was a time when it looked like great British sitcoms were a dying breed, but over the past year the genre has been in rude health. One of the most ubiquitous comics of recent months has been Jack Whitehall, with the double whammy of Fresh Meat and Bad Education boosting his profile no end. Giving him a run for his money has been Bad Education co-star Sarah Solemani, who's also shone in sublime 'bedsitcom' Him & Her. Now we get to see who won what as the annual back-slapping ceremony, hosted by Jonathan Ross, gets underway. There are 16 categories, including Best New Comedy Programme; Best Male and Female TV Comic; Best Comedy Entertainment Personality; Best Breakthrough Talent, and Best Comedy TV Actor and Actress.

FRIDAY

Derren Brown: The Great Art Robbery

Channel 4, 9pm

We're guessing that

Derren Brown is a fan of the Thomas Crown Affair remake, because its climax bears some similarities to his latest stunt – although Derren is stealing a work of art, rather than putting it back. The idea is this: he will take a painting by Turner-nominated artists Jake and Dinos Chapman from under the nose of collector Ivan Massow. He will tell Ivan which painting he's targeting and the time of the theft, and even gives him a photo of the person who will take it. Derren has already chosen his crew, and they're not hardened career criminals – he's handpicked a bunch of pensioners instead, the type of people you might pass every day without even noticing them.

QI

BBC2, 10pm

We can't quite believe it's taken her this long, but comedy writer, performer and all-round national treasure Victoria Wood is making her QI debut. In any normal week, she'd be the undoubted star attraction, but some viewers may be more intrigued by the fact that she's being joined by another first-timer, Richard Osman. On his quiz show Pointless, he's usually introduced as a bottomless pit of obscure knowledge, but will he live up to his billing on QI, or will he be thrown by a quiz where the name of game is to score as many points as possible, rather than as few? Perhaps fellow panellists Jason Manford and Alan Davies can take advantage of any confusion as Stephen Fry asks the questions on this week's theme, the kitchen sink.

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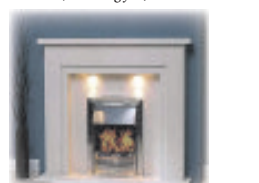
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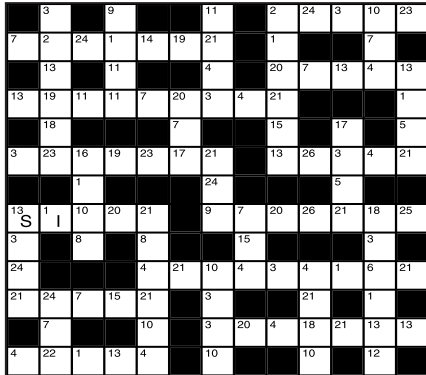
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Codeword

Each number in the grid represents a different letter of the alphabet and every letter of the alphabet is used. Use the given letter(s) to the right of the main grid to start you off.



LAST WEEK'S SOLUTION:

Y	B	D	K	E	F	M	Z	S	H	J	Q	G
X	C	R	U	O	I	T	A	W	N	P	L	V

Double Crossword

Choose either quick or cryptic clues - both fit the same grid.

Cryptic Clues:

Across

4. In a bad temper the day none came round (7)
8. Writer with a point (6)
9. Marked dates in wrongly (7)
10. One by one on the football field (6)
11. You need inspiration to draw one (6)
12. The staidest form of dislike (8)
18. Rambling rose that gives varied resistance (8)
20. Young female accompanist (6)
21. Depression that shows in your face (6)
22. A breach of security (7)
23. Packed as a precaution (2,4)
24. Haircut that's in order (7)

Down

1. Lays out feasts (7)
2. Poetically upside-down (7)
3. Entertainment that's a nice change to mother (6)
5. A bent one needs re-shaping, don't forget! (4,4)
6. Thinks of love and languishes (6)
7. Puts up a secret entanglement (6)
13. Not the more usual foreigner (8)
14. Temporary false tooth (4-3)
15. Guided a horse holding half the rein (7)
16. Statesmen may wear it with a black tie (6)
17. These creepers could be poisonous (6)
19. Possibly tore in from the East (6)

Quick Clues:

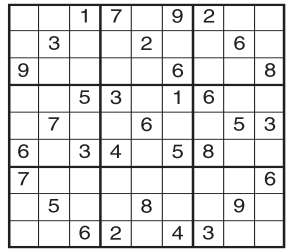
Across

4. Narration (7)
8. Aviator (6)
9. Blow up (7)
10. Shrewd (6)
11. Look upon (6)
12. Surround (8)
18. Definite (6)
20. Obvious (6)
21. Nuptial (6)
22. Clique (7)
23. Gusto (6)
24. Keep under (7)

Down

1. Discussion (7)
2. Shield (7)
3. Subject (6)
5. Meeting (8)
6. Constrain (6)
7. Disposition (6)
13. Hypercritical (8)
14. Scorn (7)
15. Rich (7)
16. Control (6)
17. Superior (6)
19. Country of the Middle East (6)

Sudoku



Fill in the grid below so that every column, every row and each of the 3x3 boxes contains all the digits from 1 to 9.

LAST WEEK'S SOLUTIONS >

9	6	3	4	1	5	8	2	7
7	5	2	8	3	6	4	9	1
8	4	1	9	2	7	6	5	3
1	9	6	7	5	8	3	4	2
4	7	8	2	6	3	5	1	9
3	2	5	1	9	4	7	6	8
5	3	9	6	8	1	2	7	4
2	8	4	5	7	9	1	3	6
6	1	7	3	4	2	9	8	5

LAST WEEK'S CROSSWORD SOLUTIONS: CRYPTIC - Across: 1 Disposition; 9 Oil; 10 Narration; 11 Repel; 13 Bengali; 14 Danish; 16 Oracle; 18 Sea-kale; 19 Payee; 20 Important; 21 Lea; 22 Head-dresses. Down: 2 Ill; 3 Panel; 4 Scribe; 5 Trainer; 6 Oligarchy; 7 Comradeship; 8 Anti-federal; 12 Pineapple; 15 Starred; 17 Repair; 19 Pates; 21 Lie. QUICK - Across: 1 Pathfinders; 9 Pot; 10 Reputable; 11 Nasty; 13 Resolve; 14 Overdo; 16 Aspire; 18 Artiste; 19 Dined; 20 Entertain; 21 Con; 22 Free and easy. Down: 2 Apt; 3 Hardy; 4 Impat; 5 Detests; 6 Rebellion; 7 Opinionated; 8 Never-ending; 12 Spectator; 15 Deserve; 17 Retain; 19 Dunces; 21 Cos.

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ROMSLEY, Waverley Crescent £850 pcm - Fees
Exceptionally presented & extended 3 bedroom home in a quiet cul-de-sac in the popular village of Romsley. Large living room with elegant fire surround featuring a real working fire. Modern fitted kitchen with integrated appliances, dining room, study/bedroom 4, 3 good size bedrooms, family bathroom with shower over 'P' shaped bath. Private rear garden and parking for 3 cars. EPC: E



HALESOWEN, Cherry Orchard Crescent £750 pcm - Fees
Sited in a sought after location and having been renovated throughout this property affords an amazing family home. Properties of this size, standard and location are rarely available. Featuring 3 good size bedrooms, a spacious lounge, separate dining room with large patio doors offering views across the garden, a brand new kitchen, new bathroom. EPC: D



NEW
QUINTON, Grayswood Park Road £650 pcm - Fees
Characterful home with good sized reception rooms. An unfurnished semi detached house in this very popular residential area. Comprising 2 reception rooms, fitted kitchen, 3 bedrooms, 2 of which are doubles, bathroom with shower, separate w.c., gas central heating, front & rear gardens, garage & driveway parking. EPC: D



NEW
HALESOWEN, Lowfield Close £650 pcm - Fees
Re-furnished semi detached house, cul-de-sac location comprising of lounge, dining kitchen, gas central heating, 3 generous bedrooms, bathroom with separate shower, garage and driveway parking, private rear gardens. 6/9 months let only! EPC: E



NEW
OLDBURY, Pel Crescent £650 pcm - Fees
A wonderfully presented modern end terrace property featuring: spacious lounge, modern fitted kitchen, 3 bedrooms, master with ensuite. Downstairs W/C, gas central heating, double glazed with driveway parking for 2 cars. Available now. EPC: C



STOURBRIDGE, Kingsway £595 pcm - Fees
Enjoying a position within this popular address, this notably well arranged 3 bedroom semi detached family home features 2 reception rooms, fitted kitchen, 3 good size bedrooms, bathroom with corner bath and separate shower, gas central heating, garage and driveway parking. Available mid December. EPC: TBC



HALESOWEN, Linton Close £595 pcm - Fees
Newly refurbished 3 bedroom semi detached house in a quiet cul-de-sac position close to shops & major bus route having lounge, fitted kitchen, downstairs w.c., 3 good size bedrooms and bathroom with shower. Gas central heating, garage and rear garden. A lovely family home. Available late Dec/early Jan 2014. EPC: D



ROWLEY REGIS, Church Walk £575 pcm - Fees
Newly refurbished to a high standard. This 3 bedroom and terraced house with off road parking for 1 vehicle offers a through lounge, fitted kitchen with breakfast bar, 3 good sized bedrooms, bathroom with shower, gas central heating. Available immediately. EPC: C



HALESOWEN, Peckingham Street £575 pcm - Fees
Wonderfully refurbished with original features maintained. 2 apartments immediately available with fantastic convenience centre of town. Ring us now to view these lovely light, airy flats, one with 2 large bay windows. Each has modern kitchen with new appliances and useful utility room. With 2 double bedrooms and 2 bathrooms these are must see exceptional apartments. EPC: TBC



NEW
HALESOWEN, Bloomfield Street North £560 pcm - Fees
A superbly well presented fully refurbished 2 bedroom terraced property in this very well sought after area having lounge, stunning fitted kitchen with appliances, downstairs bathroom, rear court yard, 2 double bedrooms, gas central heating. Must be viewed to appreciate. EPC: C



HALESOWEN, Malt Mill Road £550 pcm - Fees
A superb fully re-furnished traditional terraced house. Within easy reach of Blackheath and a short drive from Halesowen and the M5. This home features 2 large reception rooms, modern fitted kitchen, downstairs bathroom with shower, 2 double bedrooms, gas central heating, double glazing. A must see property! EPC: C



CRADLEY HEATH, Harcourt Road £550 pcm - Fees
Unfurnished 3 bedroom mid-terrace house within walking distance to Old Hill Train Station and local shops. Featuring 2 reception rooms, modern fitted kitchen, large rear garden and off road parking for 2 vehicles. Gas central heating, double glazed throughout. Available immediately. EPC: TBC



Renovated throughout - Stunning!
NEW
HALESOWEN, Talbot Street £550 pcm - Fees
Step inside this fantastic 3 bedroom terrace property and you have the opportunity to be the first occupiers of this stunning property, renovated throughout, featuring a brand new kitchen, new fully tiled bathroom with electric shower, windows & doors, carpets and gas central heating system. This property will not be available long. EPC: E



NEW
HALESOWEN, Millbrook Court £550 pcm - Fees
Spacious refurbished 2nd floor apartment in this very convenient location. Having a large lounge with triple glazed windows, refitted kitchen, 2 double bedrooms, gas central heating, garage and parking. Available early January. EPC: C



NEW
HALESOWEN, Highfield Road £525 pcm - Fees
Spacious refurbished 2nd floor apartment in this very convenient location. Having a large lounge with triple glazed windows, refitted kitchen, 2 double bedrooms, gas central heating, garage and parking. Available early January. EPC: C



NEW
HALESOWEN, Clifton Road £525 pcm - Fees
A fantastic 2 bedroom modern mid terrace property. Set within a cul-de-sac location comprising: welcoming hall, fitted kitchen with built in oven & hob and integral fridge freezer, delightful lounge, 2 good size bedrooms, re-fitted bathroom and pleasant good size rear garden, large off road parking area for 2 cars, gas central heating and double glazing. Move in for Christmas! EPC: B



BARTLEY GREEN, Woodgate Lane £525 pcm - Fees
Attractive & improved traditional cottage style terraced house. Large lounge/dining area, fitted kitchen with appliances, 2 double bedrooms, bathroom with shower, parking to front & large rear garden. Available immediately. EPC: D



NEW
HALESOWEN, Hagley Street £499 pcm - Fees
Fantastic refurbishment over 2 floors. A fully refurbished modern duplex apartment above an electrical shop in the very centre of Halesowen, featuring a large open plan living area with modern fitted kitchen, 2 double bedrooms, bathroom with shower. Additional £40 fixed electric charge is applicable. EPC: C



HALESOWEN, Hope Street £495 pcm - Fees
A fully refurbished ground floor apartment having spacious lounge, refitted kitchen with integrated electric oven and hob, 2 double bedrooms, refitted bathroom and newly fitted carpets. The apartment has a garage and gardens to front and rear, full double glazing and gas central heating. EPC: D



OLDSWINFORD, Heath Lane £495 pcm - Fees
Ideally located in the centre of Oldswinford for shops, transport links and Mary Stevens Park. This large and spacious end terrace house features 3 good size bedrooms, 2 reception rooms, downstairs bathroom, fitted kitchen, enclosed rear garden and on road parking. EPC: TBC



STOURBRIDGE, Hall Street £475 pcm - Fees
Located in the sought after area of Oldswinford. A quiet mid-terrace house, close to local shops and transport links featuring 2 double bedrooms, fitted kitchen, downstairs shower room, cosy front lounge, rear sitting room, large rear garden, double glazing, gas central heating, on road parking. EPC: E

Property

Semi price reduced

THIS improved three-bedroomed semi-detached house in Harcourt Drive, Lower Gornal, is now for sale through Wakeman estate agent at a reduced price of £149,950.

The well maintained property lies in a pleasant and convenient cul-de-sac within easy reach of amenities, Gornal village centre and access to Sedgley, Dudley and surrounding centres.

Electric

Having gas central heating and double glazing, the property has an entrance hall, lounge, kitchen, dining room, three bedrooms, a bathroom, garage, gardens and parking.

In the lounge is a fireplace with electric fire, while the



kitchen has a gas oven, electric ceramic hob, microwave oven, fridge, dishwasher, electric under floor heating, part-tiled walls and a tiled floor plus a store or pantry.

Upstairs, bedroom one has a range of free-standing wardrobes and the bathroom has been re-fitted including a shaped bath with a Triton shower.

The rear garden has a patio, lawn and a shed. contact Wakeman Estate Agents on 01902 885894 or visit the website at www.wakeman-online.co.uk



Bungalow in sought-after area

THE house at Number 10 Springhill Park, Lower Penn, is a superbly situated and much improved bungalow in one of the most sought after locations in the area.

It is for sale through Berriman Eaton priced £345,000.

With double glazing and gas central heating it has a spacious entrance

porch and hall, a sitting room, breakfast kitchen, master bedroom en suite, two further bedrooms and a bathroom, driveway parking for several cars, a garage and a garden.

The sitting room has a walk-in bay window and a gas fire.

The breakfast kitchen is a major feature of this property having cream, high gloss units with soft close doors, a

fridge and freezer, dishwasher and washing machine, a free standing range cooker with gas hob and extractor above, central island including a wine cooler and patio doors to the garden.

For more information contact Berriman Eaton on 01902 747744 or go online and visit the website at www.berrimaneaton.co.uk

Well-presented and offered at £145,000

THE house at 220 Park Lane, Fallings Park is a well presented semi-detached home in a popular area.

It is for sale through Homepoint at £145,000.

Having double glazing and gas central heating, it has an entrance hallway, lounge, dining room, kitchen, three good sized bedrooms and a bathroom.

Schools

To the front of the property is a driveway with parking and a single garage.

There is also a well maintained rear garden.

The property is in a good area for shops, schools and amenities.

It is also in a good location for commuting to Wolverhampton city centre.

For further information or to book a viewing contact HomePoint Estate Agents on 01902 766388 or visit www.homepoint.org.uk



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This detached house situated in a popular residential area comprising lounge, conservatory, four bedrooms and garage. Halesowen

Cloister Drive, Halesowen



EPC D

£280,000

Four bedroom detached house situated on a well established residential estate includes lounge and conservatory. Halesowen

Queens Drive, Rowley Regis



Awaiting EPC

OIRO £190,000

A traditional detached house briefly comprising kitchen breakfast room, conservatory and three bedrooms. Halesowen

Apperley Way, Halesowen



Awaiting EPC

£170,000

Detached bungalow with accommodation offered is lounge/diner, kitchen, two bedrooms, bathroom, garage, drive, front and rear garden. Halesowen

Fairmile Road, Halesowen



EPC D

£160,000

Dixons are pleased to present this semi detached house situated in an established residential area. Halesowen

Holly Road, Rowley Regis



EPC C

Offers Over £140,000

This modern terraced house has the following accommodation. Lounge/diner, kitchen, WC, three bedrooms, family bathroom and en-suite. Halesowen

Aqua Court, Rowley Regis



EPC B

£75,000

Modern first floor apartment with accommodation comprising of open plan lounge/kitchen with balcony, bedroom and allocated parking. Halesowen

Sovereign Drive, Dudley



EPC D

£230,000

Detached four bedroom property includes lounge, dining room, conservatory, kitchen, utility, downstairs WC and master bedroom with en-suite.

Forest Road, Dudley



EPC E

£130,000

Semi detached four bedroom property includes lounge, kitchen/diner, downstairs bedroom, downstairs wet room, family bathroom and driveway.

The Broadway, Dudley



EPC G

Offers Over £120,000

A three bedroom semi detached property briefly comprising entrance porch, entrance hall, two reception rooms, kitchen and bathroom.

Colsyll Gardens, Dudley



EPC C

Offers Over £110,000

Semi detached three bedroom property comprising entrance hall, lounge, kitchen/diner, downstairs WC, family bathroom, rear garden and driveway.

Brookfield Way, Tipton



EPC D

Offers Over £110,000

Mid terraced three bedroom property comprising lounge/diner, kitchen, family bathroom, front and rear gardens and parking to the side.

Ashenhurst Road, Dudley



EPC E

£90,000

Semi detached three bedroom property briefly comprising entrance hall, lounge/diner, kitchen, bathroom, rear garden and driveway.

Sunnybank Road, Dudley



EPC D

£79,950

This three bedroom semi detached property briefly comprises lounge, kitchen, bathroom and rear garden.

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Motoring

Compiled by Motoring
Editor Sharon Walters

Snow forecast? Then the Peugeot 2008 could just be the affordable answer

Drive time with Graham Breeze



JUST a few months after being impressed on the launch of the Peugeot 2008, I took another look and again came away with a good feeling about this new arrival.

On test was the 2008 Feeline 1.6 e-HDi 115 version and I was so taken with the option I have already recommended it to a relative looking to buy.

This 2008 is a real money saving alternative for those seeking the assurance of four wheel drive performance because it comes complete with Peugeot's superb new "grip control" as standard.

This system optimises traction in poor grip conditions and puts this crossover into a different league when combined with the 165mm ground clearance and advanced traction control. The system works because grip control transfers torque to the tyre with the most grip in a scrab-

bling manner allowing the 2008 to even negotiate a ski slope. It comes as standard with Allure and Feline trims, or is a £300 extra on lower-spec models.

The SUV crossover currently occupies less than seven per cent of the European B-segment but this is just the type of vehicle to see sales spiral upwards.

The challenge to all producers in this sector is to provide something distinctive and Peugeot have got things just right. Not only does the 2008 have the cutting edge with the new "grip" system but it also has winning looks too.

Scrabbling

Inside Peugeot has developed a new look too with the fascia capping covered in a silky material and a brilliant aircraft style handbrake situated close to the easy-to-handle grip control system.

The 2008 shares 67 per cent of its underbody with the 208 hatchback but has longer body overhangs. It's 200mm longer, 96mm taller and 25mm as well as 162mm more ground clearance. If you are a driver needing lots of rear room then the 2008 should be on your radar. While the rear seating isn't the most comfortable in the sector everything folds completely flat to offer 1,194 litres of space. All versions get ESP as well as

anti-skid, stability control, emergency braking and electronic brakeforce distribution. All round air bags are standard.

There are four badge levels, Access, Active, Allure and Feline, a choice of eight colours and a comprehensive range of petrol, diesel and e-HDi engines.

The 1.6e-HDi 115 Feline had a top speed of 117mph and 0-62mph in 10.4 seconds and a stop-start system. Running costs are low, emissions are impressive at just 106g/km and there are remarkable fuel consumption figures of 70.6mpg on the combined cycle.

Many models in the B-sector demonstrate a lot of body roll on the open road and the Peugeot is no exception but things weren't as bad as expected.

For a crossover the 2008 was actually fun to drive with a comfortable driving position and plenty of steering wheel height and reach adjustment.

For those needing the security of being able to cope with the snow or tricky conditions without the cost of four wheel drive this Peugeot may be the answer.



If you need lots of room in the rear, the 2008 certainly fits the bill

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CAVALIERS and Cavapoos, puppies and juniors. All colours. £350/£750. 07867 530504.

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8 Motoring

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10 Personals

personal

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ClassifiedAds

Old Hales let victory slip away from them

Hinckley 30
Old Halesonians 1st 26
OLD Halesonians travelled to Hinckley for a difficult fixture on the back of a loss to Broadstreet last week.

Hales dominated from the kick off and even opened the scoring with Chris Hooper. This continued for much of the first half with Joe Oxford spriting for the line to score.

Hinckley fought back to force two penalties for infringement, both converted.

The second half started in the same way Luke Smith taking the score to 6-19.

The home side started to get their act together and were awarded a try 50 minutes into the game. On 65 minutes Hooper dummied to break through for his second try.

Then Hales conceded another which was converted. Hales were penalised for collapsing the maul and penalty try was awarded.

Hinckley again drove forward to the visitors line, a maul ensued with all of the home team taking part to drive over in the dying minutes.

Tivs let the opposition get back in

Tivdale FC 1
Westfields FC 1

IN WHAT was their 100th Midland Football Alliance fixture, Tivdale will feel these were definitely two points dropped after dominating this game but failing to finish off Westfields.

Once again Tivdale started at a tempo before man of the moment Nathan Waite extended his run of goalsto put Tivdale 1-0 up.

The second half was much the same with Tivdale threatening but not converting. Westfields were growing in confidence.

As the chances came and went there grew an inevitability that this was not going to end 1-0 and if Tivdale did not score Westfields would.

Westfields won another avoidable free kick on the edge of the Tivdale box. Up stepped Jones and this time his cross was met by centre back Phil Glover whose header came off the crossbar but Westfields' Dene Whittall-Williams reacted and grabbed the equaliser.

Championship boxing makes a return

by Craig Birch

CHAMPIONSHIP boxing returned to Wolverhampton Civic Hall at the weekend with Leicestershire fighter Louis Norman becoming the new English fly-weight title holder.

Shepherd's Norman took the belt after coming on strong in the second half of a 10-round fight against Northampton's Nathan Reeve, taking the decision with all three judges.

Robert Chalmers had it close at 96-95, John Keane decided on 97-94 and Terry O'Connor scored 97-93. Going the distance took nothing away from a big battle

between the two little men. The card's other title fight saw Burton's Tom Shaw shed blood, sweat and tears to be crowned British Masters Bronze welter-weight champion, in a fight contested over eight rounds.

He was sliced open by a clash of heads in the second round but battled on to lose just one round against Chesterfield's Kris Davey, deservedly handed the spoils by 79-73 with Chalmers.

On the under-card, Tipton's Ricky Summers finished a nightmare 2013 with a bang as a first round stoppage marked his first

inside-the-distance victory as a professional.

The light heavyweight bashed about the only-once-stopped Joe Walsh, with a clubbing right hook that made him sink to the canvas.

Walsh rose but returned to his knees, clearly in great pain, with Chalmers taking action to end the bout in just 142 seconds.

Wolverhampton's Des Bowater scored a hard-fought super featherweight victory over a capable adversary in Swindon's Joe Beeden. A points shut-out was

recorded at 40-36 with Chalmers. 'The Wednesfield Warrior' had to battle to take all of the four rounds.

Bloxwich's Luke Paddock added the experienced Graham Fearn to his winning record as he moved to 5-0 as a professional at light welterweight.

Redditch's Andrew Robinson, a product of Lions ABC in Dudley, bloodied the nose of Mark Till as he also recorded a four-round points landslide.

Swadlincote's Craig Wilshee dropped Luke Osman twice in the third round of their super mid-

dleweight contest to score 40-34 on points with Chalmers.

In the show's opener, debutant Paul Holt saw off Michael Stupart, again at super featherweight. The heavy-handed Brummie had his opponent running for cover to win by 40-36 on points.

Meanwhile, amateur super heavyweight Lloyd Ransom bowed out of the ABA Novice competition at the national semi-final stage after a majority points defeat on Saturday afternoon.

Cleaner work from Luke Watkins, from Fitzpatrick's in Swindon, led him to the final.

Hayes put a stop to their run of defeats

Heath Hayes 2
Tipton Town 1

HAYES finally ended their run of six straight defeats in the Midland Alliance with a deserved win over their Black country neighbours.

Town were much the better team early on and they squandered several chances but it was the home side who drew first blood when Alex Imferey ran through to plant the ball wide of keeper Jamie Pemberton's reach.

Soon after Imferey had to leave the field following a heavy challenge from Rob Perks.

Dave Waple came on and with his first real contribution he laid on a fine ball for Tom Green to fire home a powerful volley.

Almost from the restart Green had a good chance to increase the lead but dragged his shot wide.

The visitors where enjoying plenty of possession but the home side were fighting with a dogged determination and always looked dangerous on the break.

The home defence finally cracked on 85minutes when a header from Ashton struck the bar and the rebound was forced home by Ben Hadley.

New squad proves too much for DK

Dudley K-ford U-13s 0
Walsall U-13s 34

WALSALL, fielding a rugby team with several new players, eventually proved too strong for a battling DK squad.

The first half was evenly matched with both teams impressive in attack and defence.

Walsall slowly began to apply more pressure and attacks involving forwards and backs resulted in the visitors scoring first.

The Walsall's defence was equally as effective as their attack and they did well to repel several good DK attacks.

● The Stourbridge Lions Seconds had so many players available they took two sides to Kidderminster, the A team winning 41-0 against their Seconds and the B team victorious 23-17 against their Thirds.

The Lions Thirds (The Grasshoppers) enjoyed thumping 72-0 victory over Ross on Wye Seconds.

Medics left feeling sick as Ladies score 7 again

Birmingham Medics 0 Halesowen Town Ladies 7
THIS was the first time Halesowen had met Birmingham Medics which meant they were an unknown quantity for the Yeltz Ladies.

Halesowen saw the return of Lyndsey Glover after a long injury and Hannah Troman after missing last week also through injury meant Yeltz had a strong squad, despite a few key players not being available.

It took Halesowen 15 minutes to get ahead as Rachel Letford played a great ball to Sophie Richards who put it in the net.

This seemed to settle the ladies down and there were some good runs down the wing by Chloe Harris and three minutes after the first goal, Richards passed the ball to Hayley Chatwin who got the second for Halesowen.

Central defenders Charlotte Byatt and Lauren Gilbert snubbed out any attacks the Medics attempted and their team mates were soon back on the attack.

Missing a previous chance Sian Whittall got a second to score following a beautiful cross from Katie Moore and this time there was no missing as she put Halesowen 3-0 up.

Sabrina Dale and Jo Butler made some wonderful passes to the wingers as well as supporting runs.

In the second half Halesowen took control of the midfield with Haycock and Chatwin working hard.

It was Moore who got on the score sheet next after a great ball in from Richards.

Glover and Moore were

Football

making some great runs down the wing and as a result, Glover scored two goals one after the other, both fed in from Moore, to give their side six and dominating the Medics in the final third of the pitch.

The Medics barely had a look in, their keeper played tremendously saving many shots and keeping the score to single figures.

The last 15 minutes of the game was played completely in the Medics half and in the closing minutes of the game Halesowen captain Byatt brought the ball out from near halfway line, playing the ball out wide to Richards and continuing her run into the area.

Richards sent in a sweet cross which Letford just missed making a connection with but Byatt was there behind her to smash the ball into the back of the net.

There was an almighty cheer from the players and the spectators and the game finished seven nil to Halesowen for the third week running.



Halesowen Ladies' Sian Whithall is under pressure during the match against Medics who were shutout

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Away-day jinx halts as Tipton grab win

Kirby Muxloe 0
Tipton Town 2

TIPTON'S away-day woes finally came to an end as a closely-contested clash eventually swung the way of the visitors.

Tipton gave a debut to new signing Andy Dicken and his tireless breaking up of play proved to be a vital contribution.

With just three minutes to the break Mensah Kinch surged into the right hand side of the penalty area and unleashed a shot past the despairing grasp of Elliot Shilliam.

It was to be one of Kinch's last contributions as a niggling injury saw him withdrawn just after the break.

Kirby pressed hard for an equaliser in the second half and always looked dangerous.

Substitute Matt Weyman entered the fray on 70 minutes and almost grabbed his first goal. But Weyman's persistence told and on 73 minutes he slotted home after good work from Nisbett.

Kirby continued to press hard, believing they could still get something from the game.

With 10 minutes to go, a Jordan Holmes header sailed over the bar and, with the game moving into stoppage time, Jamie Allen headed home only to see the linesman's flag deny the home side a consolation.

Pushed out of Youth Cup

Wolves U18 1
Peterboro' U18 2

WOLVES' poor finishing again saw them lose to Peterborough - this time to exit the FA Youth Cup, writes Tim Nash.

Three days after the first team lost 1-0 to Posh after losing chances, the Under-18s followed suit.

Powerful French striker Ibrahim Keita put Wolves in front in the first real chance in the 18th minute.

But Posh levelled two minutes later when Robert Duggan slotted home.

Posh's Regan Carthey rattled the bar after Jaanai Gordon tried to pull the ball across to Charlie Coulson.

But Wolves had the openings to have got back in it.

A somewhat untidy winner came two minutes after the break when Gordon curled into an unguarded net.

Hales keep bottom-placed Wolves pointless

OHHC 1sts 7 Wolverhampton 2

OLD Halesonians Hockey Club returned to Great Park, as their recent pitch woes continued.

They hosted bottom of the league Wolverhampton, who were still searching for their first points of the season.

Hales knew they must not be complacent, as they had previously lost to Wolverhampton in a pre-season friendly, and they got off to a good start when Paul Woodall converted from a penalty corner to make it 1-0 to the hosts.

Wolverhampton continued to put up a good fight, before Woodall turned provider

Hockey

as he got the assist on a Tom Bulteel goal, as the striker made it 2-0 before half time.

Early in the second half, Man of the Match Woodall got his second of the game, as he fired the ball hard into the net over the diving Wolverhampton goalkeeper.

At 3-0, Hales started to cruise and a couple of mistakes led to Wolverhampton scoring twice from penalty corners, as they attempted a comeback.

With just one goal difference Hales were motivated back into action, as they turned

Boxing champs

Top flight fighters come back to Black Country

Page 39

Seven again

Medics left feeling sick after shutout

Page 39



Ride gets bumpy as Cup nears

Burnham 2 Stourbridge 0

IN their final fixture before Saturday's big FA Cup tie at Stevenage, a depleted Glassboys side fell to a disappointing loss at Burnham.

Gary Hackett's men struggled to adapt to the bumpy pitch and were hit by two goals from Ryan Blake.

With just nine minutes gone Stourbridge found themselves trailing. A miscued shot from outside the box from Lee Togwell ran invitingly through to Blake on the right-hand side of the area and he beat Dean Coleman with a low angled shot.

The visitors introduced Kayelden Brown and then Roly Agbor in the first 17 minutes of the second period as they adopted a more direct approach.

Rowe sliced a chance on the left-hand side of the area after being found by Billingham.

The game grew increasingly stretched as Stourbridge tried to find an equaliser, but the Buckinghamshire hosts defended strongly.

Seven minutes into stoppage time Burnham wrapped up victory as Blake turned the ball over the line to condemn the Glassboys to defeat.

Heathens stay in National League

SPEEDWAY champions Dudley will, as expected, stay in the National League for 2014.

Many fans would like to see the former Cradley club join the Premier League, the sport's second tier.

But Heathens bosses have maintained that such a move would only happen if they find their own track and quit Monmore Green.

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YELTZ TURN MICKLE OVER TO MOVE UP

Halesowen Town 2 Mickleover Sports 1

HALESOWEN moved up into second spot in the table after establishing a two-goal lead in a three-minute spell late in the first half to record an eighth successive home league win.

Mickleover made a bright start with Karl Demidh blocked in front of goal after 10 minutes.

But the Yeltz soon settled to create the better chances and Asa Charlton did well to cross from the left after 15 minutes, following a neat interchange of passes.

The hosts stood up to some robust challenges from the visitors with Kevin Grocott receiving a yellow card for his shin-high challenge on Tom Tonks.

Tonks battled on bravely after initial treatment, but was eventually substituted four minutes before half-time.

Clawed

With the Yeltz chasing the first goal, Christie's deft header was clawed away on to the base of the post by goalkeeper Chris Martin after Nigel Penney headed on Neil Mackenzie's free-kick.

A drive from Aaron Griffiths was then blocked and a sweet threaded-through ball from MacKenzie found Christie but his clever and fierce hooked shot from a tight angle was turned away for a corner by Martin.

But man-of-the-match Christie slammed home a penalty and his eighth goal of the season to hand Halesowen the lead after the ball flicked up, somewhat fortuitously, to strike a Mick-

Football

leover defender's arm. Defender Joe Hull doubled Halesowen's advantage just three minutes later by powering home a header from a right wing free-kick for his third goal of the campaign.

Just before the interval, Christie played a fine ball across the box that just evaded Avun Jephcott on the goal-line.

With Halesowen in charge, Jephcott nodded a great chance wide at the start of the second period and Christie flashed a low 55th minute shot wide.

The competent Sports side had lacked a cutting edge but were given a lifeline when Demidh slotted home a 70th minute penalty after the same player was judged to have been impeded by Charlton.

Halesowen sat increasingly deep and were forced to defend for the final minutes with goalkeeper Matt Sargeant collecting Ashley Grayson's 85th minute shot through a ruck of players.

The Yeltz then survived a great escape with two minutes remaining when Curtis Tilt hacked the ball clear after Grayson's shot beat Sargeant, only to rebound off the far post and away from the pouncing Mickleover forwards.

Benbow bouncing with a hat-trick in shutout



A happy hat-trick star Luke Benbow scores one of his three goals in the seven goal shutout of Weymouth

Stourbridge 7 Weymouth 0

STOURBRIDGE slammed seven goals past Weymouth in their final home match before their big FA Cup game at Stevenage this coming weekend.

A focussed Glassboys side made a bright start and they were rewarded with the opening goal of the afternoon on 12 minutes.

Ben Billingham split the visiting defence with his pass that played

Ryan Rowe in through the right channel area and he dinked the ball past the advancing Jason Matthews.

Luke Benbow was found in space and he burst into the left-hand side of the area before slipping his shot under Matthews' body as he was closed down by Michael Walker.

Weymouth were undone by a Coleman goal-kick that bounced over the head of Nathan Walker to let in Benbow. He got the better of Ashley

Wells before neatly clipping the ball over Matthews to finish and then in the 39th minute Haynes played the ball down the right-flank to Billingham and he touched the ball inside past Michael Walker before tucking away a low angled left-foot drive past Matthews.

Benbow completed his hat-trick in the second half. Four minutes from time Chris Knight grabbed the sixth and Washbourne got the last score.

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